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MAY 1931: VOL. 2, NO. 2. NEW SERIES





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THE ADELPHI

VOL. 2, NO. 2, MAY 1931

## Notes and Comments

A READER of *The Adelphi* expressed surprise that such a "bright" magazine should contain anything so "dismal" as the article entitled *A Creed*, which appeared in our last number. His disapproval of *A Creed* was apparently directed against the literary form and not against the belief expressed, which might very well have been his own. I suspect a similar point of view behind Mr. Huxley's allusion to "pulpit eloquence" and the "strong disinclination to enlarge on my own personal experiences of 'the delights and terrors of living' " expressed in his vigorous reply to Mr. Murry which we publish this month.

IS there something insular in this type of disapproval and reluctance? I believe there is, for it seldom appears in German or French controversies, and I cannot easily imagine it in the Orient where the prevalent frame of mind is more philosophically detached and less "literary", and where people do not seem to be haunted with the fear, "Am I being too *personal?*" Sometimes it is hard to avoid the conclusion that many Englishmen would prefer to risk misunderstanding on questions of the utmost importance rather than face the dangers of even a momentary peep out of the safe shell of what is euphemistically called decorum. If this fear of the "personal" denoted recognition of the fact that the greatest and wisest men are those in whom the personal has merged with the impersonal, it would be good; but does it? In this age of self-consciousness, most of us desire to appear detached without ever having gone through the humiliations of attachment. We desire to possess our souls in dignified peace,

without going through the undignified and personal experiences through which alone the soul comes to be possessed at all. One is forced to think that in no other country and in no other age have people been so afraid of "giving themselves away" as in England to-day.

NOW it happens that much of the criticism that *The Adelphi* receives, and has received in the past, boils down to the accusation that it is a magazine in whose pages people give themselves away. To this I would reply that the accusation is true; and that it would be a bad day for *The Adelphi* when it could no longer be made. Not that everyone who gives himself away is worth listening to, but no one will be very much worth listening to until he has quite overcome the squeamish fear of giving himself away. Therefore, if Mr. Huxley ever changes his mind and decides to enlarge more fully upon the "delights and terrors of living" from his own experience, personal or impersonal (and it cannot be the latter without first being the former), I shall listen to him with even greater interest than before.

OUR support of Mr. Tawney's case for equality of opportunity in education continues to elicit criticism which, though interesting, is mostly beside the point. For instance, "Does education bring contentment?" asks one writer; "Is the typical farm-hand chopping wood for his breakfast fire less happy than the typical philosopher chopping logic in a lecture-room?" Surely the simple answer is that more equality in educational opportunity would put a greater proportion of round pegs into round holes. Thus more of our woodchoppers would be happy and—who knows?—our philosophers might even be wise men who would have done with chop-logic.

R.R.

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

## *Essays on Modern Religion*

### *VII. The Veil of Good and Evil*

FOR my own part, I must confess to a profound veneration for these great Christian symbols. When I remember what riches of spiritual meaning have crystallised about them in the centuries during which they were suspended in the midst of the meditative Christian mind, it seems to me hard indeed that I must resign my part in them simply for fear of being misunderstood. So I will take the risk, and conclude by trying to suggest the full meaning which might be attached to the great Christian symbol of the Trinity. It is two-fold. It applies to the cosmic drama, and to the drama of the individual. Cosmically, God the Father is that from which the differentiated Universe proceeds, God the Son is the differentiated Universe in its entirety, and God the Spirit is the self-knowledge of that eternal generation. That is the trinity of the cosmic drama. Man is the only place we know where that cosmic drama can be experienced. He is the completely sentient fraction of the Universal Son. Every atom of the Universe is, essentially, Son like himself; every atom of the Universe has directly experienced as he has creation and birth, according to its mode of sentience; every atom of the Universe shares the primal innocence that is his when he comes from the womb. But Man, unlike his brother Universe, has the power to forget that primal innocence: he has the power to forget it, because he has the power to remember it; he has the power to become ignorant of it, because he has the power to know it. He can forget that he is one with the Universe, as no other fraction of the Universe can do. He is one with it, and can forget it; that is his privilege, inherent in consciousness. That power to forget Unity is precisely what consciousness is.

Consciousness is the strange power that has come to a portion of the Universal Son to become a Prodigal Son. In Man the Universe knows Good and Evil, and leaves the paradise of Unconsciousness. *To know Good and Evil is to cease from Sonship: for this knowledge is illusion. There is no Good and Evil to* know. God the Father does not know it, God the Spirit does not know it, God the Son does not know it, except for the moment when in Man he has forgotten that he is God the Son. Then he creates the world of Good and Evil, which is a world of illusion; he spreads a veil between himself and reality.

It is a veil of error, yet all our human truth belongs to it. It is necessary error, which unless God the Son were to pass through in Man, he could never become God the Son indeed. He has to create the world of error, and be killed by his own creation. He is killed by it, for in the world of error he himself can have no place. To enter it, he must needs be dead; and he strives to kill himself, to kill the living whole that he is in order that he may force it into the world of error. Everything at this crucial moment depends upon his passion. If he strikes passionately, if he strikes with the power of the Lord of Life, then instead of killing his living self, he quickens it. He kills it with the death of life. But if he strikes coldly, if he poisons slily, then he kills it with the death of death.

God the Son in Man must suffer a veritable crucifixion in the world of error: not at the hands of other men, but at his own. He dies, but he cannot die. The veil of the world of error dissolves away, and he returns to God the Father from whom he was parted by it. He is reborn into the second innocence, that knows neither good nor evil, but knows that it has known good and evil. Then is God the Son born indeed, and he is Man, in whom alone the Universal Son of God knows himself as Son.

But that knowing is an unknowing; it is a being. Slowly and inevitably, God the Son in Man is crucified again. Where he has

been he knows that the world of Good and Evil is a world of error; but where he has been he cannot remain and live, and when he returns the world of Good and Evil is there. It has been destroyed in him, but it has not been destroyed. It can be destroyed only in men; and men will not destroy it. And that slow realisation is a second death. Man who is God the Son, will not *be* God the Son. Time after time God the Son has been destroyed by that realisation. The pain is too fearful, the loneliness too terrible. No power on earth can assuage that pain. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" God the Son relives that pain in Man from generation to generation. But it is never God the Father who has forsaken him; it is always God the Son who is forsaken by God the Son. God the Son who *is* God the Son is forsaken by God the Son who will not be God the Son. Man is betrayed by Man, never by God.

And God the Spirit is that which knows that all these things must be: that Man must be betrayed by Man: that God the Father can never forsake his Son: that God the Father, when his Son is forsaken, forsakes him, too: that Man is also betrayed by God. All these things, contradictory, irreconcilable, unintelligible, God the Spirit knows, and knows that they must be. The great drama of God's self-creation must be played.

I think that the epoch of God the Spirit is at hand. He lives with God the Father and God the Son; he is the consummation of their knowledge of themselves. He is not Man, he cannot be Man; but Man may reach him, or he may visit Man. He is born in God the Son, as the consciousness of his destiny.

That drama of death and birth unrolls itself in the individual man, in the larger life of human history, and in the Universe. I have tried to describe it in the great symbolic language of Christianity. If I were to try to describe it again, I should doubtless choose a different language—always a new one. For we must never suffer our symbols to harden, even in our own minds.

Finally, I return to my old assertion. We have no need of a religion; we need to be religious. For we need to be whole. To be religious, in the sense which I have tried to outline in these essays, is simply to be sane; to have learnt humility and through humility to have reconquered pride; to have become flexible to experience and perfectly obedient to that God, who as Blake said, "only acts and is in existing beings or men."

And if I am asked: Is there a short way to this condition, I must reply that I do not believe there is. I can only emphasise what I believe to be the one thing needful. It is what Blake meant by his "Marriage of Heaven and Hell"—the tearing down of the veil of good and evil in ourselves and from the world outside us. If this cannot be done, then nothing can be done. I feel sure of that: for sooner or later the mist of error, the corruption of the personal, will creep into all our imaginations. Words that belong to the spirit will be degraded to the world of Good and Evil, where they cannot live, but only become rotten. And, if you ask me, how are we to destroy the veil of Good and Evil in ourselves, I do not know what to answer. One straight road, at least, to this end lies through suffering. To have been utterly used up; to have gone on willing until there was nothing left at all with which to will; to have fought to one's human uttermost for a life one loved and to know oneself beaten; to have been made nothing, to have been annihiliated, by life; to have given everything until we find that there is nothing left to give—I think that men and women who have been through such experiences do not or will not find much difficulty in passing beyond Good and Evil. Suffering and a seed of sincerity, without which I suppose complete suffering is impossible, these are all that is required. And again, suffering does not depend upon destiny; it is not just an accident. Any man with a grain of imagination is in for it. Like lovely Miranda, in *The Tempest*, he suffers with those that he sees suffer: and once that begins, the process must go on to its

appointed and inevitable end.

Then it comes down to this. The one thing needful is the spark of imagination; this, I believe, is ultimately the thing which shall be given to him that hath, and from him that hath not it shall be taken away even that which he hath. If a man has imagination, he must suffer the pain of the world; if a man has imagination, he must see that no promised beatitude, no comfort in any after-life, could possibly alter the adamantine fact of the suffering that is and has been. Omnipotence itself cannot take away one single throb of it. When you have reached those two realisations, and it does not seem possible for the imagination to escape them, what then? Why, then is the time when you begin what Tchehov calls beating your head against the wall. And I don't think the man of imagination can escape that.

What then? Why, you just go on beating your head against the wall, until you haven't the strength to do it any more. Your thoughts cannot even lift themselves to dash against the bars. You give up, you surrender—not to anything; there is nothing to surrender to. You just acknowledge that you are beaten. If there is any meaning in life, it is beyond your knowing; and a meaning beyond your knowing is a meaningless meaning to you. At this point, this nadir, this dull desolation, say the angels, Faith comes in. But the angels have no imagination. We are talking about the man with a spark of imagination, a potential devil. And I say that at this nadir Faith is impossible. It is a bad joke. And I say, further, that at no point in the whole development of the imaginative spark can Faith possibly enter in. Faith and imagination are mutually destructive. The word Faith is, of course, ambiguous (it has been used by men to denote imagination itself); I use it in the simple and ordinary sense of the will-to-believe. I say that imagination and the will-to-believe are incompatible: eternal enemies.

If the man of imagination possessed the will-to-believe—if

this thing, which I say is impossible, were possible, then he would never have reached the nadir. Nothing can turn the edge of experience more fatally than the will-to-believe, which is the will to impose the human will; imagination, if it can be described as a will at all, is the will to submit to experience. Ultimately, I suppose it is just an instinct, a simple being thus and not otherwise in the total organism. Duhamel ended one of his most beautiful books with the sombre words: "You can never give imagination to those who have it not." Those words once struck terribly chill upon my heart; to-day, they do not disturb me. I see that it must be so.

The man or woman in whom the spark of imagination has remained alive, reaches the nadir of desolation. There is no way to it except by imagination, and there is no escape from it if the imagination is there. Then, I say, if that desolation is real and total, something must happen. Just as there is no escaping desolation and death, there is no escaping integration and rebirth. But if the desolation is not real and total, then I believe that nothing at all, or only bad things, will happen. An abortive rebirth is a ghastly thing.

I am not saying that mystical experience is inevitable in total desolation. I don't believe that at all. That kind of experience really does seem to me accidental, and not essential: not even, as far as my knowledge goes, desirable. But integration and rebirth, in some form or other, does seem to me inevitable. The thinking part, the personality, the I, gives way simply because it can maintain itself no longer. That which is stronger and deeper asserts itself; that by which we are united to the universe triumphs over that by which we are divided from it. And that by which we are divided from the universe, and separated from ourselves which belong to the universe, is the knowledge of Good and Evil.

When that veil is pierced, the imagination is purified. It sees distinctly and directly. And the joy of this simple seeing is such

that men speak of beauty and of harmony. And always their words are misunderstood, except by those who have attained the same directness of vision. For to the majority of men beauty and harmony are only goods in the world of Good and Evil. Beauty is the opposite of ugliness, harmony the opposite of discord. But the beauty and harmony of which the pure imagination speaks is not the opposite of anything. It is a name for that which is when the veil of Good and Evil, and beauty and ugliness has dissolved away. It is the universe in its simple truth, as it is seen by the vision which is freed from the taint of belief, or anxiety, or desire.

This vision is such that men who have seen it have declared that God is Love; it was evident to them that what they saw was perfect. *Omnis existentia est perfectio*, said Spinoza. But make no mistake. That love, which in their language created all things, has no more to do with what we ordinarily mean by love than the beauty they saw has to do with what we ordinarily mean by beauty. The love they meant is just as manifest in a syphilitic child as in Jesus of Nazareth himself. So beware of it; it is devastatingly impersonal, and unless you are prepared to have your personality devastated, keep away from it.

But if you are prepared to have your personality devastated, then there is nothing to fear: absolutely nothing. There is the price you must pay. By whatever road we try in thought to approach the reality of the third Religion, the deep dark river flows between. There is no bridge, no boat, no ferryman, no guide. No-one can help you. The devastation of your personality is required. If you can't pay the price, well you can't. But my imagination cannot conceive a man making a deliberate refusal. If he gets to the edge of the river, he will not refuse; but he may not see the river, he may not know what to do. I can't tell him; nobody can. But, if he stands his ground, if he submits to his own very ignorance, then he will be told what to do. What there is to do will be done for him, and not by him.

The certain thing is this: that the devastation of the personality has got to be. There is no getting round it—no short cut, no easy way. You can have labour-saving houses, you can have labour-saving religions even; but you cannot have a labour-saving integration. What I do believe is that the great truths of integration and detachment need re-statement. They are always new discoveries, demanding a new language. We have no *right* to use the old language. Perhaps for a little while, while we struggle after the new idiom, the new metaphor; but always for new life there must finally be new language too.

(*The End*)

# *Mary Arden*

"MARY ARDEN" (Mrs. Violet Middleton Murry) died on 30th March last. I met her for the first time in September 1923, after she had sent some contributions to this magazine. Her slight sketches were so gay, so vivid with natural life, so completely without artifice, that I was not really surprised to find their author as gay and natural as they. She was evidently one who expected and at that time had found nothing but delight in living. This seemed to me strange, and wonderful. We were married in May 1924. Before the end of 1926 her fatal illness had declared itself; but her gaiety, and her essential faith in life were undiminished to the end.

Many of her best stories were published in *The Adelphi*. Perhaps the most memorable are *The Idealist* and *Love to the Angels*; and the transition from the laughter of the earlier to the wistfulness of the later story corresponds to the changing stress of experience upon a nature which instinctively bade welcome joy and welcome sorrow. *Elle avait porté plus que son faix des ennuis communs à toute créature bien née.*

J.M.M.

## *The Young Klepht*

(*From the Modern Greek*)

MOTHER, you shall hear me. Do not dissuade me.
Am I to grow up to be a slave to the Turks?
Before I was born did you wish for a virtuous son
Who could only bow and obey with the crowd,
Who should learn to be servile to those he despised
For the sake of a bed, a full belly, a quiet old age?
Successful, respectable sons may be an old woman's joy,
But one who is free as an eagle, fearless and free,
Though he turn her thinning hair to snow in a single night,
Though he keep her down on her knees in prayer
For his soul, his safety, his life, and even his supper—
Surely that is the best kind of son a woman could wish to bear?

If I were to serve the Turks, my heart would die within me,
So I refuse to serve them. I must have time to live.
No, I'll take my gun and go up into the mountains
And there I'll join the Klephts and live the life I like.
If I want friends, I can make friends with the trees;
If it's talk I want, I'll talk to the wild beasts;
The rocks shall be my bed, and my coverlet the snow.
When the spring comes in, I'll descend perhaps to the valleys
Where there are flowers and wine, and girls who dance and sing.
Because I am going, mother, you must not weep.
Mother, don't weep. Give me your blessing instead—
I need it if I am to kill, as I mean to, many Turks.

What you must do is this. Go and plant in the garden
A rose-bush and a clove-pink. While they blossom
You'll know your son is alive and fighting the Turks;

But when the sad day comes, that bitter morning
When those plants flower no more, but wither and die,
You'll know I am wounded to death, and may put on black."

Twelve years the rose and clove-pink flowered,
And when they died, she who had tended them died.

WILLIAM PLOMER

## *Black River*

SHADOW cutting the meadows,
The black river flows.
Only the slow-winged birds can watch
The hidden way it goes.

That moving breast of darkness
Between the bended trees—
What shadow is drowned in its shadow,
No man sees.

But who climbs a bare hill, looking
Downward, may behold
In the dusk, a curve of ebony bearing
The moon's gold

And out of the gathered trees,
The heavy flight
Of a blue heron leaving the stream, to seek
The nest of night.

FRANCES M. FROST

JOHN COWPER POWYS

# *Dorothy M. Richardson*

LIKE that of many another writer whose method of approach is too subtle to be fully grasped at first sight, like that of Wordsworth and of Pater and of Proust, the slow-moving, creative power of Dorothy Richardson has little by little come into its own. Dealing with the "imponderables" that mankind in the mass is so reluctant to appraise at their true value Miss Richardson's unique genius is becoming a test for the self-weighing of modern minds. It is not that she has founded a school, for no one can imitate her; nor that she has become the idol of a côterie, for her readers are of many varieties of temperament and taste. It is rather that, like Montaigne, who had the same brand of egoism—with the difference that his is a superlatively masculine egoism—Miss Richardson has sunk a new shaft into a new stratum of material, and has thereby challenged all writers to follow, *upon their own soil*, a kindred method. And so integral to her own peculiar slant of vision is the particular kind of "artesian well" she has chosen to sink into the substance of reality, that numbers of her contemporaries, without either thought or desire to copy, are profoundly influenced by her.

Her nine volumes are nine chapters of an universally significant psychic biography: the biography of a solitary human soul. Such is her subject-matter. In attempting to estimate her work we must therefore ask what rivals does Miriam Henderson, the heroine of these nine books, find already existing in world-literature? What has been already achieved by the human race along these lines? Miriam, simply considered as an interesting human soul, is quite the equal of the hero of Proust's work and a good deal superior to the hero of Rolland's "Jean Christophe". To find her superiors in intellectual interest one is compelled to turn to such world-

famous figures as Hamlet and Faust. But even Hamlet and Faust do not fill the spiritual gap, do not supply the subconscious material, claimed, as her right, by Miss Richardson's young woman. Why not? Because both of these are essentially projections of the *male* quest for the essence of human experience; and Miriam is a projection of the *female* quest for this essence.

But what of the innumerable feminine writers of our own and of other ages who have used to the limit their qualities of *feminine charm?* Do not such writers exploit their femininity as far as it will go, in the enticing, beguiling devices of what to-day is called Narcissism? What, to take a famous woman writer, a contemporary of Miss Richardson, what of the distinguished and, among literary people, the so justly popular work of Virginia Woolf?

And what, in a previous age, of George Eliot?

These two names introduce a very interesting consideration; for in their work the charm of gracious womanhood (always so attractive to men and women alike) is enhanced by a great deal of sheer mental power and, moreover, exactly the kind of mental power in which men excel.

But both George Eliot and Virginia Woolf betray their deepest instincts by using, as their medium of research, not these instincts but the rationalistic methods of men. Methods in the nature of things disqualified to do justice to such instincts: congenitally and diametrically opposed to them. But Virginia Woolf, it may be objected, like many another alluring woman writer, past and present, possesses feminine charm in its entirety, charm denied in great measure to poor George Eliot, and uses it, just as do Katharine Mansfield and Rebecca West, in an appealing harmony with her use of the essentially masculine gifts of reason and cleverness? Exactly. Here is the whole point of my contention. These gifted women write of beautiful things in a beautiful way and are full of both rational cleverness and distinguished charm. Why then, supposing either of these attempted a monu-

mental psychic biography, like that of Miriam, would it be ridiculous to claim for it a position in the same category as Hamlet, Faust, Wilhelm Meister, and the work of Marcel Proust? Because, in this line, the great *men* of genius have already gone infinitely further than it is possible for mere feminine cleverness, combined with all the feminine charm in the world, ever to go!

What, then, has Dorothy Richardson done that puts her into a different category and makes her masterpeice a rival—along its own peculiar path—of these great world-famous productions?

This is the crux of the whole matter. Dorothy Richardson is our first pioneer in a completely new direction. What she has done has never been done before. She has drawn her inspiration neither from man-imitating cleverness nor from narcissistic feminine charm but *from the abyss of the feminine subconscious.* Thus, in estimating the ultimate value of her "Pilgrimage," the task of appreciative criticism itself becomes an experiment in spiritual metempsychosis. A woman critic must needs express her subterranean knowledge of her own sex in that "man's language" which is the inheritance of the ages and which to a large extent Dorothy Richardson herself has been compelled to use; while a man critic "by taking thought" and "adding a cubit to his stature"—or the reverse—must get as much as possible of his inherent "heavy rationalism" out of the way, and use the rest in articulating as nearly as he can the secret treasures of this ocean-floor of mystery.

Let us whisper the truth. Without a hard, cold, clear, analytical core of the most ferocious masculine reason existing at the heart of her being, Dorothy Richardson herself would never have been able to articulate these things. All authentic human genius is, in some degree, bi-sexual; and it is only because she is the first *consciously to turn the two elements upon each other* in a reciprocal fury of psychological interpretation, that her achievement is so startling, so important, and so new. All the way through this

extraordinary book the abysmal difference between the soul of a man and the soul of a woman is emphasized and enlarged upon. Upon this "tragic tension", as Keyserling well calls it, depends the whole method of Dorothy Richardson's art. And it is because she has against her the entire weight of man-made civilization, or, as Spengler would put it, of our own particular man-made Faustian Culture, that it is so difficult to win for her, for her daring pioneer-genius, the recognition that we give so quickly and so easily to conventional charm and conventional masculine cleverness.

But how far is this stupendous achievement of Dorothy Richardson's unique at the present hour?

It *is* almost unique. It *is* almost alone. And that is why it is so extremely difficult to do full justice to what she is about. In reading *Pilgrimage*, we are unconsciously on the look-out for those particular renderings of the Good, the True and the Beautiful which have become an inheritance of our very blood and bones. We have to learn the art of taking these with a difference. To a large extent we must overcome this exigency that goes so deep and is so intricately entangled with the conventional feelings of ten thousand years. We must cease to look for "charm and cleverness" and learn to look for something rich and strange, for something that has always been there and yet has never been given utterance.

But although Dorothy Richardson is alone in articulating the secret acceptance of life in this peculiarly feminine way-of-life as something that underlies both pain and pleasure and returns upon the memory, when the pain is over, as sweet dregs to a bitter draught, one must remember that all the most interesting writers of fiction in our time, while aiming at some sort of rational synthesis, pick up on the shore of their effort much irrational flotsam. The difference is that while the most significant discoveries of her contemporaries are made incidentally, hers are deliberate and pre-

meditated. What she has achieved in this modern Pilgrim's Progress is a strange kind of "salvation" only to be attained by a certain peculiar awareness of an apparently purposeless life-flow.

Of this great secret there are to be found certain "intimations in marginalia" in the work of several of her more remarkable European contemporaries.

In the solid, massive edifices, the huge psychic sculptures of Thomas Mann, for instance—assuredly inspired milestones in the great Faustian quest—we come upon bits of masonry whereon, their seeds brought thither perhaps by the birds of the air, are growing the little green mosses which in the Miriam books would be the chief interest. James Joyce, in his ferocious, erudite, solipsistic fashion, hacks now and again—though indeed it seems to be by accident—in the course of the phantasmagoric experiences of Stephen and Bloom, at the little rooted grasses by the side of his philological stone-quarry; which, again, in the Miriam books, would be the chief thing!

Nor does it require much penetration to detect running through every one of D. H. Lawrence's books at least one tattered thread of the life-tapestry (The White Unicorn amid the Mille Fleurs) which so captivates Miriam. It is indeed this particular thread that helps to make these queer books so exciting; though it is twisted in a sufficiently taut, galvanic knot in *Lady Chatterley*. It is the thinnest, frailest, darkest thread of his own turbulent epicene pilgrimage, projected like a trailing broken string of hieroglyphic beads, in these prophetic and ribald incarnations, that he was doomed to follow; and there are many things in common between it and Miriam's discoveries. Virginia Woolf might have drifted in the evolution of her quick-silvery talent into a few chance revelations of the same order if the gods had not cursed her with a fatal trickiness and a still more dangerous tendency to debouch from essentials into airy niceties. It is interesting to note, too, how a writer as shrewdly conversant with modern philosophy as May

Sinclair, and one who appreciates Miss Richardson's power, has been herself unable to resist the temptation of playing with exciting subjects rather than undergoing the long, bitter, laborious discipline of projecting her inmost self into a really considerable work.

The Sitwell brothers, Osbert and Sacheverell, come much nearer to this patient concentration, this pruning away from an imaginative work of everything that is not intimately, awkwardly, disquietingly, obscurely, disconcertingly *personal*; but the fretted petulance of an amateur arbitrariness side-tracks them from the main issue. Dorothy Richardson is the only one who really continues—in her new, feminine way—the great egoist life-quest of Montaigne, Goethe, Wordsworth, Pater and Proust. And it is just because she has not deviated from this path that the rank-and-file find her so difficult an author. She *is* difficult. She is difficult in a way totally different from the way in which the objectively clever writers, the intellectual puzzle-mongers and riddle makers are difficult. She is difficult, too, in a different way from Henry James, whose "difficulty" lies entirely in convolution of presentment.

There are very few great fiction-writers, very few among those who have the power of creating characters that impress themselves, in every detail, upon the minds of readers, who, in addition to being fiction-writers, are also original philosophers. There is no original philosophy in Jane Austen, in Scott, in Thackeray, in Dickens. There is no original philosophy in Victor Hugo, Balzac, Stendhal, Guy de Maupassant, Flaubert. It would almost seem as if the faculty for the creation of living, three-dimensional characters, characters like those of Dickens, made such demands upon personal magnetism as to drain the author of his whole vitality and leave nothing over for philosophizing. Since George Eliot, no Englishwoman has created living characters and possessed at the same time a philosophic propaganda. Not that George

Eliot's philosophy can be compared, for subtle, illuminating interest, with that of Dorothy Richardson; but the author of *Middlemarch was* a novelist and, incidentally, no contemptible thinker.

Dostoievsky alone—for Tolstoy's "art" never altogether blended with his opinions—was a thinker with a mystical philosophy absolutely original and new; while, at the same time, he was an artist worthy of comparison with the very greatest. Now the remarkable thing is that the heroine of Miss Richardson's great work has an identity so real that it is only comparable to the identity in ourselves of which we alone are aware. This remains true even though most of her being, even though *all* of her being, be drawn from the interior of Miss Richardson's consciousness of herself. Hamlet and Faust were, without question, drawn from the interior of Shakespeare's and Goethe's consciousness of themselves. For thus only, only by being the projection of a deep intimate personal experience, can characters in fiction acquire a symbolic importance and come to be representative of the universal human situation. Even if Miriam Henderson is more closely akin to Dorothy Richardson than the Idiot is to Dostoievsky or Don Quixote to Cervantes or Wilhelm Meister to Goethe, she is not a whit more akin to her than young Marcel and Swann (taken together) are to Proust or Dedalus and Bloom (taken together) are to Joyce. Miss Richardson's intimate friends could point, one may be sure, to countless important differences between the novelist herself and her heroine. Miss Richardson, one at least is allowed to guess, is probably five times more humane than Miriam, more humorous than Miriam, more complex than Miriam, less contrary than Miriam; for it is surely a fact that no writer can create a character and endow it with convincing vitality such as shall be more interesting, more attractive, more subtle than he is himself.

But what a triumph in portraiture Miriam is! It is hard to think

of any woman in fiction more living, more real. One comes to know every cranny of her mind, every eccentricity of her feelings, every tangent of her thought. But the point I want to make is that this kind of portraiture differs completely from the outward, built-up reality which charms us so much in Jane Eyre, Becky Sharp, Beatrix in *Esmond*, Hardy's Tess. Such women are types. With Miriam it is not what she feels but rather the way she feels that makes her symbolic.

And the peculiar genius of these extraordinary volumes lies herein: that through Miriam's heightened awareness of them all, the other characters in the book imbibe an intense life of their own, making them stand out in clear-cut relief against the ebb and flow of her feelings.

From what has been already suggested, three rare qualities emerge as characteristic of Miriam's pilgrimage through modern life; in the first place, the genius that has made of this young woman a symbol of universal human experience; in the second place, the convincing reality of the various persons who compose the drama of the girl's practical and intellectual life; in the third place, and this the greatest of all, the secrets to which we are admitted in regard to Miriam's femininity. Yes; the first two of these attributes are but the rough-hewn scaffolding of the substantial edifice of Miss Richardson's art. Other writers have made of a particular human character an epitome of the common experiences of our race. Other writers have surrounded such a person with a vivid entourage whose figures and gestures "strained", as Henry James liked to put it, through the protagonist's vision, assume the mellow atmospheric, tactile values of the chiaroscuro of Rembrandt. It is in the feminine substratum of this work that one grows aware of an entirely new element in fiction . . . something that we look for in vain in Jane Austen, in the Brontës, in George Eliot. These quiet and penetrating books represent, in fact, the only attempt that I am aware of to put into psychological fiction

the real "philosophy", moral, æsthetic, spiritual, and that which underlies all these and escapes from all these and mocks at all these—of women where they differ most from men.

Lots of men have created living women. Lots of women have exploited their own sex-humour (as Jane Austen did) or sex-eroticism (as the Brontës did); lots of women have used the philosophy of men and given it a certain feminine twist (as George Eliot did); but no writer, as far as I know, in any country or in any age, has deliberately undertaken to represent the peculiar feminine reaction to life, not only in humour and in sentiment, but in what might be called cosmic apprehension, or planetary æstheticism. This undertaking is entirely new in literature; unknown to Montaigne, unknown to Pater, unknown to Proust. Miss Richardson is a far more original writer, a far greater writer, than the clever philistine-culture of our age has the sensitivity to understand. She is an authentic philosopher in the great "open-secret" tradition; the tradition that *excludes* Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, Russell, Whitehead, Watson, and *includes* Heraclitus, Pythagoras, Plato, Montaigne, Goethe, Emerson, Nietzsche, Spengler. The main point about this aspect of her work, however, is that she has carried this philosophy of the "a-logical, innocent eye" into a new dimension, the dimension of women's secret, instinctive sensitiveness to the mystery of life. She takes her place in the great rôle of thinkers who, like Heraclitus and Goethe and Nietzsche, are intent on Life Itself, in its mysteriously flowing stream, rather than any human hypothesis of its whence and whither. But her "novum organum", her organ of research, in this profane cult, remains the subconscious sentiency of women rather than that of men. She is in fact the modern priestess of a strange and exciting Renaissance of certain lost illuminations which must have originated the unknown ritual of the Great Mother's "Mysteries" at Eleusis. One of her most devoted feminine disciples has pointed out to me only recently

that it must be remembered that the planet we live upon is essentially a *feminine* planet. No mythology has ever dared to make the earth masculine. The sun, the moon, the stars, are all, so to speak, psychically bi-sexual; but Earth, under all her names, remains a goddess. And since this is so, how curious, how significant, that until Dorothy Richardson began to write her patient, convoluted, difficult books, not a single human thinker, whether in prose or poetry, has really made of the feminine attitude to life the vantage-ground for interpreting life! Did this distinguished writer know where she was going and what she was doing when she wrote *Pointed Roofs*, her first book? For even there, her *method* is in full application. Where did she find this singular method? She can only have found it, like all mysterious discoveries in art-method, in some underlying fold or conch or secret volute of her own consciousness, unrolled there and brought to light for the first time. The literary student looks in vain for any earlier "fons et origo" of such daring innovation in fictional narrative.

Dorothy Richardson is a Wordsworth of the City of London; only she is a Wordsworth, who, in exchanging the mystery of mountains and lakes for the mystery of roof-tops and pavements, has purged away those teasing pedentries, puerilites and pieties which spoiled and cluttered up that great poet's original revelations. But she is "after" precisely the same thing . . . something that is very old and very pagan and absolutely non-moral . . . what Wordsworth himself, indeed, calls quite simply, "the Pleasure which there is in Life itself". Most beautifully does Miriam Henderson in these books speak of her "profanity". This word "profanity" implies just exactly the non-moral, anti-social, lonely zest for the pure Life-Sensation stripped of all surplusage, which Wordsworth "suckled in a creed outworn" so indignantly advocates.

But Miriam's famous "profanity" implies much more than this. It implies a far more important and serious change in our system of

spiritual valuations than the literary critics of our time have had the wit to see. Miriam's "profanity" is indeed nothing more nor less than a very deep and original system of life based upon a mystical quietude; an intensity of entranced, receptive contemplation. It is no wonder, therefore, that Dorothy Richardson's inner circle of sophisticated admirers has been hit by the Great War. The raw, scoffing unhappy, defeatist mood of after-war writers like Aldous Huxley would be naturally atrophied and paralysed in that particular nerve of exultant life-zest which it is Miriam's profane benediction to exploit. It is for this reason that Miss Richardson's most eloquent champions, as far as her own country is concerned, have been writers like Edward Garnett and J. D. Beresford, who belong to an older, calmer and more self-possessed generation. Splendid examples of the stupidity of smart cleverness in the understanding of our author are constantly appearing; and one is secretly not altogether sorry that it should be so! One derives a certain malicious pleasure from this spectacle of critical smartness behaving as it always has behaved in the presence of the quiet, unpredictable growth of organisms that have the sap of genius in them. It is naturally the "Smart Alick" type of critic who will find the mental adventures of Miriam Henderson insufficiently documented by modern catchwords, and altogether too grave, too serious, too mystical, too obscure. As a matter of fact nowhere in modern literature, including France and Germany and America, is there a writer with more of that particular stuff of genius in her, which, of all things, is so irritating to the cheap satirist and so totally obscure to the social comedian.

This Montaignesque "Life-Cult", with its evasive and magical ramifications, as our author tracks it so patiently along its wavering and fluctuating sun-paths, forces her to wrestle with the most recondite problems of style. Why, for instance, is it impossible to express these subtleties in an ordinary, hand-to-mouth, normal

prose? Why would they lose their quintessence, their very identity, why would they become something altogether different, if they were expressed in plain, blunt words? Osbert and Sacheverell Sitwell, those subtle Sophisticates, should be the ones to help us, just here, in elucidating this mystery, for they, too, have had to wrestle with that terrific problem of style which is so airily, so lightly dodged by the clever, unchildlike minds of our younger generation.

Dorothy Richardson's style has, like so many rare prose-styles, its distinct affinity with poetry, without in the least degree approximating to that bastard hybrid, "prose-poetry". Like poetry, what it desires to express is so evasive, so much a matter of what one feels, so to speak, through the pores of one's skin, that it has to be expressed in a gnomic, oracular, *idolatrous* way. To attempt to express it in plain, blunt prose would be to attempt to express logically, rationally, argumentatively, what is always killed and blown to bits by logic, reason, argument. You must remember that this "Pilgrimage" of Miriam's is a sort of Quest of the Holy Grael. It is as serious a thing as Wilhelm Meister's search for the Æsthetic Absolute. It is as serious as the long Proustian beagle-hunt after the wild Hare of the Eternal hid in the sour turnip-fields of Time. What Dorothy Richardson's heroine is looking for is in fact the divine object of the ecstatic contemplative life, nothing less than the Beatific Vision; and not merely for this alone; for she is looking for this as it manifests itself, in diffused glory, throughout the whole inflowing and out-flowing tide of phenomena.

And for the very reason that our author's protagonist is beating up such recondite game . . . the very Deus Absconditus of what most of us crudely call the "Inanimate" . . . it is clear that "style" in her work becomes like the holy language of a very complicated ritual, the only effective invocation of the shy *Numen* whose presence she is summoning.

*How should not the smart, fashionable critics fight shy, and* the *Hoi Polloi* steer clear, of a work that appeals so definitely to posterity by its contempt for every single one of the chords and strings of the modern orchestral devils' dance? Naturally, it is not easy to "skim" these books. Not one of your confounded quick-time readers could say to another, "I've just been glancing through the last volume of Dorothy Richardson, and it seems to me awfully swell stuff." No wonder that, like Walter Pater and Flaubert, Miss Richardson writes slowly, treating every paragraph as if it were as unique and exquisite a problem as a Pindaric Ode; or, better still, as if it were some carefully translated oracle, stolen in the gusty wind from the tops of Dodona's oak-trees, and puts syllable by honeyed syllable into beautifully vowelled Attic Greek.

The disciples of Dorothy Richardson must resemble those first slowly increasing readers of Wordsworth or those groups of passionate adherents who gathered round William Blake. There are in America a much larger minority than she probably realizes who know her books by heart; but unfortunately few of these are book-buyers: they depend on libraries. But let that be as it may, it would seem pretty certain that even as things are there is no living writer in English with a reputation equal to hers among the adepts and the initiates. The history of literary reputation is indeed a curious thing; and one wonders rather bitterly how many of the famous popular English writers of our time realize that while it is practically certain that in a hundred years not a soul will be reading any of them, it is equally certain that thousands and thousands of literary people in those days will be searching and snatching at every word, trace, sign, and relic, left of Dorothy M. Richardson.

(*To be concluded*)

## J. C. CHADWICK

# *Portrait of a Lamb, Bleating*

PROBABLY what first attracted Dina's notice was that he was sitting more or less in the attitude of her father's bronze Buddha on the edge of the common, whilst he had pencil sketches propped up round him, like a pavement artist.

Rather shyly, she went nearer to these and began staring at them. There was one of a lean, smooth, Egyptian-looking cat's head that she liked, and there was one of a coat hanging on a door, and beside this there was a carved sandstone figure of a horse, and there was a sketch of a lamb—its nose wrinkled up, its eyes two slits, its neck stretched out, its tail bowed in—a lamb, in short, too miserably cold for words.

Said Dina, "Do you sell these drawings?"

The young man replied, "Yes, I do sometimes." Yesterday, for instance, he had sold one rather well.

Said Dina, "Would you sell that lamb?"

"I'd barter it, more likely."

"Barter it? For what?"

He asked, "Why do you want it?"—and Dina stared at him for a moment with her mouth slightly open, because she had not expected that question. She went on, "Oh!—Well, I like it. I . . . It's wonderful, I think. So like a lamb," she added truthfully, but, she felt, feebly.

"There are lambs much more like lambs over there in that field," replied the young man.

"Yes. Yes—there are, aren't there? But it gave me a feeling . . . ." She looked at it again, and looked at the young man again; and said, "Did *one* lamb look like that—just *one* lamb? Or did you look up and see—lamb-ness all at once, one day?"

He said, "All lambs look like that when they are bleating."

"No!" contradicted Dina. "Oh, they don't, really. They don't, anyway, when I look." Her mind plunged on alone for a few seconds. She then asked, "What's in that picture besides lambness?"

"Coldness."

"And besides coldness?"

"No way of getting out of coldness."

"Helplessness, then? Misery. And Misery-that-isn't-going-to-end-yet?"

"Quite," replied the young man.

"Three sad things—yet the picture's lovely."

The young man agreed.

"Did that lamb grow up into a sheep ever?"

"I can't say. This lamb'll have to grow up into ideas. If anything."

"Mine!" But then again she contradicted, "No—I'll have to grow up into its, rather?"

"Not at all. *Are* its—now; or you would not like them."

Her eyes opened. "Am *I*—all I like, then?"

"All you dislike too? And all you fear? And all you want? All you are capable of seeing? Yes—I think so," said the young man.

"Oh!" She waited, and some Thing in her said, "That's the truth! And I have always known it, really."

She reflected further—she thought back. But, yes—it was the truth; and she had always known it. She looked again at the young man. He looked at her. He laughed. She suddenly put all the money she had with her down at his feet—remembering that even fellow-finders of the truth must eat to live and pay to eat. But, since he had enough to pay to eat with at the moment, he gave Dina back her money. Then they both laughed.

Of course, she did not any longer want the drawing. She was all, inside herself, that that was, and had overpast it now she knew that.

So had he, of course, having known enough to draw it.

So the interesting, and the only interesting, question for them both was now, "What next?"

## *The Twelve*

THERE by some wrinkled stones round a leafless tree,
With beards askew, their eyes dull and wild
Twelve ragged men, the council of charity
Wandering the face of the earth a fatherless child,
Kneel, at their infidelity aghast,
For where was it, some time in Syria
(Or maybe Palestine when the streams went red)
The victor of Rome, his arms outspread
His eyes cold with that inhuman ecstasy
Cried the last word, the accursèd last
Of the forsaken, that seared the western heart
With the fire of the wind, the thick and the fast
Whirl of the damned in the heavenly storm:
Now the wind's empty and the twelve living dead
Look round them for that promontory form
Whose mercy flashed from the sheet-lightning's head:
But the twelve lie in the sand by the dried tree
Seeing nothing—the sand, the tree, rocks
Without number—and turn away the face
To the mind's briefer and more desert place.

ALLEN TATE

BASIL WILLEY

# *Suburban Prelude—II*

## V

THE motley ugliness of Oxford Street is mitigated a little, west of Oxford Circus, so Mr. Widdup thought, perhaps by he dip which the road takes here, perhaps by the knowledge that Iyde Park opens just beyond, or by the recollection that winter unsets sometimes crimson the western end of it. Roads opening northwards reveal the green heights of Highgate and Hampstead. De Quincey had looked longingly up these roads, Mr. Widdup emembered, because northwards lay Grasmere and Wordsworth. But for Mr. Widdup just now these roads, and Orchard Street in particular, into which his 'bus now turned, were avenues into his own suburban past. And as Orchard Street gave place successively o Baker Street and Regent's Park Road, as the rich significance of ll things genuinely metropolitan yielded gradually to the staleness of outer London, Mr. Widdup became aware of that drop in emotional temperature, that gradual surrender of the faculties to he onset of victorious commonplace, which he had known on nany a former return to Northgate. The soul-climate of that uburban youth of his had certainly been numbing. He had, it is rue, passed through one or two phases of passionate resistance gainst *was uns alle bändigt, das Gemeine*, most of them inspired by optimistic nineteenth century literature. After reading Emerson's essays he had once, when a schoolboy of fifteen, astonished his mother by breaking silence in the midst of a dinner of cold nutton and sago with the exclamation "Good heavens! Here we are on this marvellous planet, whirling along through infinity together, and yet we can't find anything to say to each other but pass the salt'!" His mother had sadly noted this outburst of his as milestone: it meant that Peter had taken his own life in hand,

and that he would now work out his own salvation, or otherwise, in a region outside her sphere of influence. He had told himself that, as Carlyle had said, in all things there is inexhaustible meaning, and that the eye sees in them what the eye brings means of seeing. He had once defied a friend, during a discussion in his room at home, to point out anything which a determined vision could not use as a window into infinity. His friend's reply had sunk in: "Well, your wall-paper, for instance."

Mr. Widdup's early struggles had been intense and wearing, and he had grown up into a nervous and introspective youth, believing in his own power to transmute his surroundings, but actually finding all his blisses in other quarters. When maturity had brought the power (or the nerve) to face things as they are, he had come to see that with each revolution of the wheels of 'bus or tram that carried him homewards from any excursion, there was an ebbing of his interest in life. And even now, when as a middle-aged man, he reckoned himself immune from the assaults of adolescent depression, he felt something of the old chill as the 'bus pursued its northward journey. At Swiss Cottage, indeed, there was a patch of emotional warmth (like one of those pools of warm air near a haystack on a cold autumn night, Mr. Widdup thought), for it was in this neighbourhood that Lucy had lived, and that corner had often served them as a place of meeting. "Ah, now that", thought Mr. Widdup, as the 'bus pushed unmercifully on into the cold of Finchley Road, "that was something which had power over *das Gemeine*, far greater than any alchemy I could ever summon from my own soul. Yes! during that blessed time the stubborn world melted into opaline haze, and all things and persons passed me by with a rapt look, intent, it seemed, on their own blessedness as I on mine".

## VI

During much of the remaining part of the journey, Mr.

Widdup's emotions were, comparatively, in abeyance, and he fell to noting, with a dull disgust, the urbanisation of his early environment. It was merely a part of the general deterioration of the world since his youth; another evidence of the general disappearance of Nature, the divinity of the nineteenth century, whom he too had worshipped ardently. It was with a sense of outrage that he beheld, at every turn, some garage, or block of shops, or row of desirable residences, usurping upon the hedges and fields he had known. It was worse than a physical assault, this attack upon memory. To Mr. Widdup recollections were more real than the "real life" of each present day; yet here these realities of his were being denied by objects which every moment mocked him with "No, you are wrong, you must erase those pictures of twenty years' standing; it is now thus and thus".

The annoyance aroused in him by the manifold recurrence of this experience even convinced Mr. Widdup that he must, after all, have "given his heart to these scenes", as Lamb had said, more than he had supposed. He envied Wordsworth the unchanging permanence of the scenes of his early recollections. Men with suburban backgrounds, he reflected, cannot write *Preludes.*

At last the 'bus drew up at Northgate and Mr. Widdup dismounted. A few steps down a side street of new brick villas brought him to his old home, now the abode of his grandmother and her devoted daughter. There it stood, in the middle of a row of its fellows, still smiling through its bay-windows, venetian-blinds and lace-curtains, with that air of surprised respectability which had always reminded him of the ladies who came to his mother's "at-home days". The house had been one of the first of the semi-detached villas to be built here, early in the reign of King Edward, when Northgate was still a village preserving, as the builders had pointed out, its "original rural charm".

Newness had been its chief characteristic throughout the time of Mr. Widdup's boyhood there, and it was therefore with

another shock to habitual feeling that he now recognised it as quite old among its upstart neighbours; as having even a trace of "period" dignity lacking in the labour-saving erections of the post-war era. "I am like that house I once lived in", Mr. Widdup reflected, as he opened the gate, "Fairfield, c'est moi! I am as Edwardian as those ugly sash-windows and those pretentious stone-mullions; my ideas, like Fairfield, are the product of that bye-gone age, when Fascism, Communism, Birth-Control and Wireless were unheard of."

His relatives, who lived here now were likely, he thought, in view of their limited means and their nonconformity, to have preserved the old tradition intact. And indeed, it seemed to be so as the front door opened and his aunt, wearing the white ribbon of the United Kingdom Rechabite Order, embraced her darling Peter as if he were still the boy he had always seemed to her. As he entered the hall a faint but penetrating odour met his nostrils, blended, it seemed, partly of camphor and potpourri, but symbolical of how much!—of continuity, of feminine conservatism, of "central peace subsisting at the core of endless agitations"—of just that old world which, by now, he had become eager to recapture. Far from feeling constrained or superior, as he had anticipated, on account of his escape from all this, he now longed to identify himself as completely as possible with it. He found himself noting, with disapproval, certain signs that even in this house there had been movement; that life, new life, was bubbling up even here, life that derived partly from the new age as well as from the old. Through the dining-room door he caught sight of a small wireless set by the fireplace; a few photographs of unknown persons rested on the mantelpiece; and in the front garden, where formerly there had been grass and a clump of euonymus bushes, haunted by the caterpillars of the magpie-moth, there was now crazy-paving in the modern style, with a stone bird-bath in the middle. The *raison-d'être* of this place, Mr. Widdup complained

to himself, was to be unchanged; he resented as impertinences these adjustments to contemporary conditions, these concessions to modernity. Whatever seemed to express the disintegration of old standards was, for the moment at least, distasteful to him. It shocked him that anything should be found here which sprang from the new morality of "Have-a-good-time-why-not", instead of from the old one of "Don't-do-that-or-you-won't-go-to-heaven".

Almost immediately he became aware of a new and more penetrating odour—was it lilies, or carnations?—and his aunt, yes, she certainly had seemed more silent than usual while he had been taking in his surroundings. Why, there were tears in her eyes.—"Mother passed away early this morning, dear."

* * * *

Peter remembered with self-reproach, as he stood near the aged, wasted form surrounded with flowers, his foolish resentment against signs of newness in the house. Here then, was something newer than wireless, the crazy-paving and all the new suburbia. Precisely where he had most confidently expected and hoped to find conservation, Death offered him, as if with deliberate irony, a piece of his very latest handiwork. The minister came in, and Peter listened while he spoke of the old lady's life, of her courage through fifty years of poverty and widowhood, and of the faith in God which had been both the cause and the reward of her endurance. Peter had known his grandmother's faith from boyhood; it was the faith he had rejected before he had known why, and that from which all his later development had only alienated him more and more. Yet in the presence of death itself he agreed entirely with the minister. "There is no such thing", he reflected, "as an absolute past, since a present event can modify it retrospectively. The meaning of no individual's life can be read until the life is over. Now that she is dead, my grandmother's actions and words are literally other than they

were when she was alive. Not merely in a sentimental sense, or out of respect to the dead only, but with strict truth, it can be said that what was formerly lack of imagination has become fortitude; what was narrowness and bigotry, faith. What a living person believes may be superstition or folly, but it is no longer so when he has died in that belief. As long as we breathe there is a presumption against us; when we expire this is removed; like all who have suffered defeat, we are thereby somehow put in the right."

VII

Thwarted thus in his quest for the past, Peter wandered through the house trying to read the meaning of the old place in the light of this latest event. The task was almost too complicated, for the house was, to him, a palimpsest many times over-written. He went to his old bedroom-window and looked out over the familiar scene—the row of narrow villa-gardens with its background of fine old trees and the glimpse of open country beyond, still unaccountably preserved in its original beauty. There was the old red-brick manor-house with a white belfry, which had represented to him all Dickens' country houses in turn as he had read the novels in boyhood; by its side stood the cedar whose level branches used to show black against the sunset, mimicking the cloud-bars, and the dead ivy-covered tree, which thrust up slantwise a fantastic neck ending in a bare prong, often the subject of delightful imaginings between him and his mother as they knelt together by that same window at bedtime on warm evenings. He remembered how all this had looked at the time when he had begun to be conscious—perhaps at twelve or thirteen—of the awakening of imaginative life within him. He had stayed for hours by this window on many a fine June evening watching the sunset and the miraculous after-glow in the north which still lingered after he had gone to bed.

The white northern light had seemed to bring near to him that

strange, supernatural region of the mind, the North Pole, where in trance-like silence and purity the Laplanders plied their reindeer sledges by the light of the midnight sun and the aurora borealis. This side of the house was the exciting, the romantic, the sacred side; the front looked out upon streets and shops—*das Gemeine*—but this, ah, this! commanded infinity. Through this window had come to him most of his first impressions of divinity; he had unconsciously formed here the habit of looking away from his fellows for emancipation and solace, and of finding in Nature a thrilling emotion which he felt sure had more to do with God than Sunday mornings in chapel had. He had been a Wordsworthian before ever his father had introduced him to Wordsworth. "Perhaps I should have been more of a success", he thought to himself now, "if I had expanded south-east towards *das Gemeine* and my fellows, instead of acquiring this incorrigible propensity for God and the North Pole."

These were some of the undermost layers of the palimpsest. Written over all these he could decipher how the scene had appeared to him on the evening before he had first left for France during the war. It had glimmered upon him with a concentration of significance whose meaning was clearer now than it had been then. Over this, there was the expression it had worn when he had returned after the Armistice: a wan, shrunken look, as if it had shared in the prevailing decay of the old life. Formerly it had seemed infinite, and he had striven vainly to expand into it; now it was an old garment which he had outgrown. After this, when he was in love with Lucy, there had come a rejuvenescence, and a sort of infinity had returned, but it was of a new quality, and seemed unconnected with the older feeling. And now that he was verging on middle-age, what had it to say to him? Another shrinkage seemed to have occurred, but he could make out little else at the moment. The present never held much significance for him; contemporary impressions in the light of common day were

no more than exposed negatives till time had developed them. But he saw enough to understand that the "palimpsest" image was inaccurate; the pictures were not simply stratified separately one above the other, but each successive picture modified all its predecessors; the process was continuous development, as of a musical theme; and by what modulations its final meaning would be unfolded, who could tell?

"Time and Death," he thought, "these are the great developers and meaning-givers. I have been relying so far on Time to develop my meanings; Death has given meaning to the life that has just departed. But do I want to wait for Death to give meaning to mine? Why do I research so eagerly into time past? Probably because my present is empty and passive, whereas the past is rich in ready-made significances. But "the past"—what is it, that I should rely upon it or live in it? Have I not discovered that no absolute past exists? Either the outer world changes and falsifies our memories, or (this happens in any case) we change, and the memories are modified by the change in the mind that remembers. But there are some people who, after a certain age, seem to change but little, save passively, at the bidding of Time. These, when their development has become arrested, are the people who dwell most upon their past, since from their comparatively motionless standpoint the backward perspective remains fairly constant. Wordsworth was one of those after thirty, hence the *Prelude*. He was fortunate, in that his past was linked with things that can change little within human memory, so that he could believe in it as an absolute. But I, now that my development has ceased and my present is empty, have nothing comparable to fall back upon. This scene from my bedroom window? Ah, but it is threatened already; its continuance is as precarious as that of a sand-castle when the tide is rising. It is time to pack up and move further on. When all things are in flux, there is no time or place for loitering and backward-glancing. If I don't want

to be one of the multitude who move only at the command of Policemen Time and Death, I must move voluntarily and of set purpose; I must develop, and create my own meanings, since no more will be created for me. Can I do this? and is it true that, as some say, I can, by so doing, alter my own destiny?

If the past, hitherto thought unchangeable, turns out to be only one more of the "relatives", how much more ought not the present to be putty in my hands? The trouble with romanticism was that it was the mood of men to whose further progress the future was barred, and this vitiated the quality even of the retrospection to which they were addicted, and in which they specially excelled. If I would escape their fate, I must see to it that my recollections are those of a man who is still living and creating significance. But what toil! Am I equal to bearing this burden of complete consciousness, or shall I not inevitably sink back into my habitual coma?"

## VIII

Chastened by these and other thoughts, Mr. Widdup took leave of his aunt, and of Fairfield, and caught the motor-coach homewards, as he had intended. His mind, both dazed and awakened by the unexpected climax of his visit to London, kept pace with the hurrying vehicle, and they had reached open country before passing objects began to make any impression upon him. "Tasks in hours of insight willed can be through hours of gloom fulfilled" repeated itself incessantly to him, as he cogitated the issues which the day had brought to light. As the coach swung along the new arterial road to the north, the ebullition in Mr. Widdup's mind began to subside, and finally ceased quite abruptly. He became aware that he was acutely fatigued. The new arterial road was raw and ugly. It was a tentacle of the hateful new London, thrusting itself insensitively through the old rural civilisation, and tainting the countryside with metro-

politan influences. Mr. Widdup wished he had returned by train. A train-journey established the necessary hiatus between London and one's destination; one stepped on to the magic carpet, and one arrived in a new place, quite separate from the starting-point. This coach-travelling was different; forced to be conscious of the route all the time, you found, on arrival, that a new psychological link had been forged between London and home. Mr. Widdup enjoyed remoteness, separateness. So "distance" too was an illusion, a "relative". He would always travel by train in future. Ah, but this would be a piece of romantic futility; he had learnt how to be superior to "relatives."

A blight, cast by a London brought nearer by the coach-journey, rested upon Steeple Foxted as he dismounted. This was the kind of thing one must resist. One should counteract this effect by remembering, for instance, the real objective blight resting permanently on those London slums.

Meaning, significance, an ordered and purposive life. "Practising the presence of God", the preacher had called it.

Possibly even *creating* the presence of God? Mr. Widdup pondered this possibility as he walked up the lane to his house, and resolved, by way of a beginning, to increase his subscription to the local housing society.

ROGER DATALLER

# *The Inquiry*

A HEAD emerged for a moment, with a touch of blue tunic and a glint of metal: then a voice rapped through the half open door, and hearing his name, he passed into the larger room.

At last. For over half an hour he had been kicking his heels in the "snug" that opened off the bar of the "Jolly Pitmen". Not that he had been requested to lounge alone. Others were waiting to deliver evidence at the inquest now proceeding in the best room of the tavern. Two colliers with the bony shaven polls of their kind had kept him company, peppering the conversation with cheerful irony. "Goo on", tendered Phipps, the elder of these, his pale lips delivered for a moment from the stem of his pipe, "its nobbut form-al-li-tee—" The other collier extended jaunty finger tips as he passed. "It'll soon be ower for thee—cheer up!"

He conceded a faint smile (really he was rather pleased that they had been with him), but his heart throbbed painfully as he entered the inquiry. A swift glance captured everything. There sat manager Birchells on the other side of the big table—who could deny the Birchells moustache?—and Copeland, the under-manager, stocky and vibrant with energy, beside him. The rather sleepy figure with the black watered eyeglass ribbon dangling would be the coroner. And——

"James Edward Bagnold?"

It was the company's solicitor speaking, and the witness made the admission remotely, doubtful, it would appear, of the validity of his own existence. Funny! one's name intoned like that. And where was Perrin? Ah, spacious in the roomy chair, hands in pockets, and a silver watch chain only slightly spanning his aldermanic front, sat the Union representative. "Must keep my eyes on Perrin",

he concluded, "Perrin, the Union man. Never did care for Perrin. And he's bound to have his questions."

Meanwhile, still a little abstractedly he was conceding the other particulars. The deceased roadlayer, Worfolk, had been discovered asphyxiated in the workings over which he, witness, was deputy in charge. Yes, one admitted all that. And the crisp voice of the company's solicitor hurried from point to point of the preliminaries. "This man's friendly", thought the deputy. "Perrin now?" Undoubtedly, Perrin would need watching——

"Do you recognise the ventilation door marked X upon the plan"? The solicitor's white finger ran over the map of the colliery workings, switching along the ribbed outline of the familiar galleries, and finally halting at a point in the north-east district—"There?"

"Yes, sir." That door! He swallowed hard, hoping that Perrin hadn't noticed. Perrin would read anything into evidence. You knew Perrin's style, sweeping, rhetorical. "The air current is the life blood of the miner. The air current is the life line of the workings." Perrin always speechified.

"You are aware that the door in question was propped open with a fragment of stone, and left open?"

"I have been told so sir."

"And that such a door remaining open would short circuit the air supply from the place where the unfortunate man happened to be working, leaving him little or no air at all to carry on with?"

"Yes sir."

"We may take it that whoever propped and left open the door in question would in all probability be held responsible for the atmosphere in which the deceased met his end?"

"I suppose so sir."

"Now I want you to consider the next question very carefully. It is most important to the bearing of this case. What kind of workman was deceased?"

"Oh, pretty fair sir." What else could one say? Worfolk *was* pretty fair. You couldn't find a better roadlayer in the colliery.

"No, no. I don't mean quite that. In character now. Would you consider the deceased man at all given to negligent habits? Is it possible that he himself left the door open in the course of his activities?"

"It is quite possible."

"Would the deceased use the door in carrying supplies?"

"He would need various things at his work sir."

"Tell us what he would need."

"Oh, timber, hammers, nails—"

"Fairly heavy material?"

"Yes sir, pretty heavy."

"I suggest that the deceased in carrying supplies propped the door open himself and omitted to close it?"

"It is quite probable."

"Extremely probable?" The pursuing voice admitted no compromise.

"Yes sir." Out it came. Well, what harm could there be in that? Praise or censure, it was all one now to poor Worfolk. The solicitor, however, still rubbed his cheek with faint dubiety. Was this the end? The solicitor sat down. And slowly Perrin arose—

Perrin straightened his waistcoat, cleared his throat, and turned his fresh, fleshy face with the twinkling grey eyes in the direction of witness. He had the big, vain mouth of an orator.

"You are the district deputy?" Perrin glanced demurely downwards at the table littered with papers.

"Yes." No "sir" for Perrin.

"Tell us what you were doing when the tragedy occurred."

"Surveying the roadways."

"You were fully occupied with this job?"

"It's a one man's job"—hotly. Just the sort of question Perrin would ask.

"Don't answer at length," said the sleepy man with the watered ribbon, mildly. "Yes or no will do." And Perrin smiled faintly at the farthermost corner of the building.

"What had you been doing for the previous hour?"

What was Perrin getting at? How much did he really know? Better tell the truth at any rate. "I was dragging a tarpaulin from the slant into 52's airway for one thing."

Perrin slid a fat finger over the map and gave a significant snort. "Ah, and so on your journey you would take the doorway in question?"

"Yes, at that particular time I did."

"Were you alone?"

"Yes."

"You did not fail to close the door behind you?"

"I did not."

"It would be criminal if you did not. You recognise that?"

"Yes."

"Now then—" Perrin hitched his thumbs in his waistcoat armholes, "Shall we make absolutely certain? Did you prop the door open as you passed through with your burden?"

"I did."

"With what did you wedge the door?"

"I don't remember."

"Think now—a piece of wood, a piece of stone?"

"A piece of stone, I think."

"And you displaced the stone when you had passed through with the cloth?"

"I did."

Perrin smiled faintly. "This is rather curious. You can't recall with what you propped the door open, yet you remember perfectly well that you closed it?"

"I do remember."

"Definitely?"

"Definitely."

"What time would you make that?"

"About ten minutes past ten."

"And they found poor Worfolk gassed at eleven?"

"I believe so."

"What did you do after the job related?"

"I went to the north side of the district."

"And you remained there?"

"Yes."

"So that you and deceased it appears had the door marked X upon the plan between you?"

"What do you mean?"

"I suggest that there is no real evidence to suppose that Worfolk met death through his own negligence, and quite enough to suppose that he might have met it at the hands of another." And Perrin stared intently at witness. Then he shrugged his shoulders. "I have no more questions to ask."

So that was what he thought? What could one say? "You can assume what you like—I tell you I did close the door!" Remotely, Perrin was muttering, "No usefulness in asking further questions. . . ."

Ought one to step down now? A mute appeal to the body of the court evoked a slight response. Someone uttered thanks faintly, and witness realised that he was at liberty to depart.

He regained the "snug" and dropped into a seat beside the colliers who were still waiting. "By gum! but thou art lookin' sallow," observed the elder. "Am I?" he commented simply, "I think I'll take a breath of air. I—I don't think I'm feeling well."

He left them and entered the quiet street. The newly-gilded clock on the parish church said twelve. In half an hour—perhaps much less—that flagrant insinuation started by Perrin, and extended broadcast by Perrin's friends, would be circulating around the colliery area. "Jim Bagnold, he——"

He slipped down an alley into Summer Lane. "How do, Jimmy?" a voice came from the shadows. "How do," he answered. He did not know who had spoken nor did he pause to ascertain. A hundred yards beyond the houses where the first green pastures climbed a ridge to the skyline, he perched on the nearest available railings. Of course, he had opened and propped the door, and of course he had closed it again. Stage by stage he endeavoured to reconstruct the course of that momentous morning. He had no witnesses to advance, worse luck, to prove how, single-handed, he had dragged the tarpaulin from point to point. It would appear that you could be a cursed sight too independent at times. He saw himself approaching the door—there was a broken roof bar just in front of it—and scouting around for a wedge of some sort, wood or stone? But why particularly wood or stone? Why not a piece of coal? Why not?

He set his teeth upon his thumb as his memory rekindled with the suggestion. It was all bearing in like some point in a negative newly developed. He had hovered over a litter of both stone and coal fragments, and finally selected because of its roughish surface, a wedge of coal. He remembered now, and would in all probability have recalled as much before, had he not been so distracted and confused by Perrin's cross-examination. The wedge that they had found had been a stone one. "I must go back and tell them," he muttered, slipping from the fence, and setting off at a jog trot down the road in the direction of the "Jolly Pitmen."

When he burst into the "snug" it was empty. The two colliers had vanished. No matter. His business being in the best room, he had half opened the door when the brawny arm of a policeman fell across his chest. "Go slow mister—no hurry—wait you a minute. . . ."

"But it was coal—*coal*," he vociferated, "I know now—"

"That's quite all right," said the policeman disposedly. "You'll be able to talk as much as ever you like in a minute or two.

They're breakin' up now."

"I must say what I have to say!"

But even as he spoke the room began to empty of its occupants. They streamed into the corridor and swarmed into the "snug" as he lingered helplessly watching the exit. As Phipps the collier and his mate emerged, "It was a piece of coal," he muttered tremulously, "I forgot at the time." He saw them gaze upon him with steady, contemptuous eyes, and he followed a step or two, almost plucking at their sleeves. Then they hurried out. "A piece of coal," he repeated, "coal—" but of the others nobody seemed to be listening. . . .

## *Summer Night at Hyde Park Corner*

GREAT globes of light spill yellow rain:
Pencils of gold through purple gloom.
The 'buses swarm like heavy bees
Trailing fat bodies. Faces loom,
Moonlike, and fade among the trees
Which, lit beneath by lamplight, bloom
High into darkness. Distant traffic
Sounds with dull, enclosing boom. . . .

Sleep extends a velvet forepaw.
Night spreads out a downsoft plume.

A. S. J. TESSIMOND

BEA HOWE

# *The Wood*

THEY turned off the main road into a small lane winding up through a narrow valley.

"We now approach the Fingests," said Daphne Meirion. "There is White Fingest, Red Fingest and Green. They lie at the end of this valley, which I think is the loveliest in Buckinghamshire."

Andrew Marvell turned his head lazily. All his movements were slow and graceful. On either side of them were half-hidden fields, rolling in smooth deep curves towards a low line of hills, banked by great hanging beechwoods. They are like an arrested green wave, he thought mechanically. Somewhere, a lark sang invisibly and a sweet scent, he did not know what scent it was, drifted through the air.

"Have you been here before? It looks a pretty desolate place."

So detachedly did he put this question to her that Daphne wondered whether he expected an answer or not. Anyhow, she replied:

"Yes, I have been here once before in March, when only the blackthorn was out. But I decided even then I must return one day."

"Did you! Why?"

"Because it is such a lovely and, as you said, remote place. This lane only takes one to the three villages of Fingest and they are very difficult to find, I believe. The beechwoods close round them so secretly."

They continued driving in silence. Daphne Meirion had never found Andrew Marvell easy to talk to, and he seemed more than ever uncommunicative to-day. He drove his car well, but with complete indifference, staring in an expressionless way ahead.

One never knew whether he was enjoying himself or not. Look ing at him, Daphne Meirion remembered the first time they had met. It must have been three years ago. He had been leaning against the wall of a crowded ball-room, tall, dark and romantic-looking. For his gaze, even then, was withdrawn from the world moving directly about him. His unusual pallor possessed a curious gleam derived from the satin-like quality of his skin, of a remarkable texture for a man forced to shave daily. His dark hair and eyes were all the darker for this contrast. Daphne Meirion had discovered his name was Andrew Marvell and she instantly thought of the poet. "But at my back I alwaies hear, Time's winged Charriot hurrying near." Was he, like this probable ancestor of his, listening to the ghostly echoes of that fatal music? Later, when she came to know him better, she realised how right had been her first impression of his melancholy character.

They had not met again till a month ago, when he had asked her to dine with him and she had been stung into acceptance by the diffidence of his invitation. The first time they dined together it was with mutual friends; the second time, they were alone. On both occasions, though, Daphne found this romantic-looking young man with the beautiful name reserved and difficult almost to the point of a rude coldness. But it was this very coldness which repelled and charmed one in the case of Andrew Marvell. He seemed like a statue existing frozen and apart, until some unknown enchantment would seize hold of his life and force him to become alive.

So, pitying him more than liking him, Daphne Meirion found herself being undefinably drawn his way. He had few friends, he told her, as he found the young men and women of his own age difficult to get on with and felt much happier in company of the old, or at least, matured. Naturally, Daphne was quite surprised when, hearing she was to appear in a play being produced for charitable purposes, he asked her to procure him a ticket. That

morning, the day of its first performance, he had rung her up and suggested a quiet drive and lunch in the country.

"You will probably remain at home all day, becoming more and more nervous. Much better come out with me instead. At least, it will take your mind off to-night's performance," he said.

Daphne assented to this proposition gratefully. He often surprised her by a curious delicacy of perception which a sensitive woman might have possessed.

So they drove up their remote valley towards the three hidden villages of Fingest and the once distant beechwoods drew nearer. We might lunch in one of them, thought Daphne dreamily. Then she looked at her companion's spotless white flannels. He was always exquisitely dressed and she had never seen him with his hair ruffled or tie out of place. An amused smile flickered across her face.

"What are you smiling at?"

Unknown to her, Andrew Marvell had been watching Daphne for the last five minutes. She reminded him of a flower sitting beside him, so cool and detached. The delicacy of her colouring appealed instinctively to him. That pale fawn hair and eyes to match; also the lips only faintly touched with pink. He liked it. There was nothing insistent about her. Suddenly, he found himself thinking of a plant which grew against a wall and flowered only in winter. Its minute flower was icy white, but the tips of its sweet-scented petals were flushed faintly pink. Like her lips. He smiled quickly. Winter daphne or daphne mezereon, that was what his flower was called. He had got it at last. Then he smiled again, secretly. How odd, for it was so like her own name. But she was speaking.

"I was thinking your white flannels might be spoilt if we unched in a wood. The ground is always damp and sitting on moss generally leaves a green stain somewhere."

"Don't be absurd, of course it won't spoil them. Our only

trouble will be to find a wood we both like. We will go on passing one after the other until we find ourselves back in London."

Daphne laughed.

But they did find one lying only two miles beyond. It lay just off their lane, on the further side of a great bank of brown earth, through which the pale-green fronds of some young bracken shoots were slowly unfurling. Before them rolled and swelled the rich Buckinghamshire landscape, but they did not know what country lay behind. It seemed to belong to some strange enchanter, for it was hidden by the cloistral ranks of these tall silent-breathing trees. Erect and smooth they rose, and in between their gracious spacing lay pale pools of chequered sunlight. Daphne touched one beech trunk. Its smooth grey pallor, like watered-silk faintly marked in black, fascinated her.

"Shall we walk a little further in so that no one can see us?" said Andrew.

"Yes, of course."

They entered the beechwood, carrying a large but light luncheon basket between them. As they moved, last year's leaves rustled dryly under their feet. They lay so thick here. Overhead spread the branches covered by young leaves of such an intense yet frail green colour, they seemed to exist apart from the great trees which had given them life. Beyond their exquisite shimmer, a breath as of stilled, green fire, showed the sky's faint blue. Nothing moved. All was silent and cool. Only a small grey pigeon cooed somewhere, nesting in this wood.

They sat down upon a vivid square of emerald moss fringed by an almost invisible forest of erect red hairs. The beechmast lay like a brown carpet near. Leaning back, Daphne's fingers slid once more over the silvery-silk surface of the great trunk supporting her.

"It feels like skin," she said, "so cool and smooth. I should rather like to be a beech tree in June."

Andrew Marvell did not answer, bent over their picnic basket. There was already a faint green stain on his trousers.

They lunched on the wings and breast of a young chicken and a crisp lettuce salad. Some lemon-cheese tarts followed and then Andrew handed Daphne a box of large red strawberries. There were finely cut sandwiches of bread-and-butter to eat with them.

"What a lovely lunch!" exclaimed Daphne. "I am quite sure you did not get it out of a shop."

"No, I made cook pack it up for me. My mother says she always spoils me."

Andrew was filling a small orange cup with hot coffee from a thermos. Daphne thought: Yes, you are the kind of young man most women would spoil. Then she wondered absently if he had ever fallen in love or had some kind of a love affair or other.

After coffee, Andrew offered her a cigarette and then flung himself down on the beechmast. He began to smoke, lazily watching a chain of blue rings he was making float away. Daphne gazed round. It was very still in this wood. Not even a leaf moved. There was only a faint flicker of movement along the ground; among those pale pools of leaf-chequered sunlight. She suddenly felt Andrew's eyes upon her and moved, nervously, under his gaze. Why was he looking at her in that absorbed way? Something beat quickly inside her—was it her heart?—and she almost blushed. To overcome this odd feeling of sudden embarrassment, she picked up a book lying beside her and opening it began to read out aloud at random: "Reaching the old mill at Turvill a path to the left of a small fir plantation should be taken by the walker wishing to find Hellspond."

"What on earth have you got hold of?" Andrew turned on his side, facing her.

"It is a little book called 'Rambles Round London' which I found on a bookstall. I often bring it out with me into the country. It is written by a very energetic gentleman called Mr. Roger

Thrump, who informs one of all the walks and excursions that can be made within a thirty mile radius of London. It was through Mr. Thrump I discovered this lovely valley."

Andrew laughed.

"Well, go ahead and I will listen. I am sure it is a most entertaining work."

Daphne continued. But she remained conscious all the time of Andrew's eyes fixed steadily on her. Her heart began to beat again, while her body felt it was being slowly wrapped in a rising tide of flame. A burning, but at the same time melting, sensation. She trembled, so namelessly excited, frightened, but still conscious of the minutest details of life happening about her. Please stop looking at me, she wanted to cry to Andrew, but her lips were dumb. She felt their wood was no longer still and remote. It had become the core of some new emotional life, never before experienced by her. Caught up into it, will-less and without knowledge, she read on, unable to take in a single word she was saying. Something very strange was going to happen soon, she thought. She did not know what it was, but she would not be the same Daphne after it had happened, and it seemed concerned only with herself and the throbbing, fixed glance of Andrew's. Suddenly, as she realised it was impossible to bear the unbearable atmosphere of strained suspense between them any longer, her book was flung out of her hand and she looked down to see a dark head on her lap, while two arms clasped her round the waist violently.

"I can't bear the sound of your voice any longer. Please stop," muttered Andrew.

She remained looking down at him, trembling in every limb. His usual pallor was gone and a lock of wild hair hung over his brow; he had flung himself across her lap so violently. Daphne longed to push back that lock and then run her fingers caressingly through his hair. It was a longing which shook her so, by its

sweetness, that she stayed motionless in its grip.

Passion had surprised them both too suddenly and they could only remain looking at each other, torn by different conflicting thoughts and emotions. In Andrew's eyes, always so remotely alive, shone a light which made them appear very black and excited. He seemed to be becoming alive. Daphne was fascinated by the strangely kindled beauty of his face while the wood marshalled its huge beech trees behind her in a dream and above them hung that still breath of green leaf. It was the most exquisite moment of her life, but she was always to remember it afterwards with a terrible stab of pain that it should have passed, so fleetingly, and brought no light of a miraculous act upon their lives. For Andrew began to kiss her violently; her knees, breasts, and thighs. He pressed close up to her, urgent and alive.

"I love you," he cried, "I love you. Please kiss me and say you love me too."

Then he stopped, bewildered by the extraordinary power of the emotion suddenly released within him. He stared at her again, wildly.

"I love you. It must be that," he muttered.

Daphne still hung trembling above him. One part of her longed to melt away in his arms, the touch of his body on hers was so lovely; but another part, equally strong, remained frightened and so unresponsive in its apartness. She sat divided in this way, almost as inanimate as the grey smooth beech trunk which rose behind her, calling her to seek protection like another of her name.

"Andrew," she cried, "I——"

But thinking that she did not feel as he did, and that he had behaved in an entirely unpardonable way, Andrew's arms dropped from her waist. He turned his head away.

"I am sorry," he said in a low voice, "I quite forgot myself. You must try to forgive me and understand that I——" he broke

off at a loss to explain his own extraordinary behaviour. The gleam of quickening life died in his eyes and a curious numbness, that numbness habitual to his aloof mind, made him its lonely captive again. Smoothing his hair down, he lit a cigarette. He did not care if Daphne allowed him to kiss her now or not. But did he? His hand still shook and a haunting sadness filled his mind.

Daphne watched him, that unknown tide of mysterious emotion had also died within her. Once more the wood lay still and remote, but its magic was gone. She wanted to cry, she suddenly felt so denied that promise of a strange and lovely happening. She put out her hand and touched her companion. She had to, somehow.

"Of course I understand," she whispered.

They remained looking at each other, the victims of a situation in which Andrew should have taken the rôle of an active and powerful initiate. Instead, he glanced dully at his watch.

"We ought to be returning. It is after four and I must not make you late for to-night."

Daphne rose and began to pack their basket mechanically.

Quarter of an hour later, they were driving down Fingest Valley, their beechwood left behind them for ever.

"You must not think that I kiss every girl I take out to lunch with me. This is the first time in my life I have ever wanted to kiss anyone. You have forgiven me, haven't you? I did not think you would mind. I ought to have controlled myself at once."

It was the longest intimate speech Andrew had made in his life.

Daphne put out her hand and touched his arm.

"Of course I understand. I have never wanted to kiss anyone else either. It was so lovely in that wood. I am glad you were there with me too."

She could not say more for she felt shy, conscious of her companion's embarrassment. Then they suddenly found themselves holding hands and talking more easily to each other than they

had ever done. So they returned to London.

After that evening's performance, Andrew went round to see Daphne. Her play had been splendidly received and, in the rôle of a young Chinese girl, the heroine of the piece, she had achieved a great personal success herself. He found her dressing-room crowded and in her long pearl-grey robes with her face so formally made up, it became a mere painted mask, she was a complete stranger to him. He congratulated her awkwardly and they remained talking stiffly as if they had never longed to kiss each other that afternoon in a beechwood.

Then others claimed her attention and Andrew Marvell turned away in unbearable pain. He would not see this girl again. Something about her disturbed him too much and he determined to put her out of his life.

But every day of the following week Daphne thought continually of the young man who had driven her down into Buckinghamshire. His face was always before her eyes and she felt terribly alone and sad. At last she could bear it no longer and she sat down and wrote him a note. "Will you come and see me on Saturday morning?" she wrote, adding quickly before she changed her mind, "I love you," and signed it "Daphne." On receiving her note, Andrew immediately telephoned.

"Of course I will come on Saturday," he said, in a low voice. "Will eleven do?" Then he added, "I love you too."

A tense silence followed, and as Daphne wondered whether he would continue speaking, or must she, he rang off.

But as she waited for him on Saturday morning, feeling very strung up, he surprised her by entering her sitting-room, unannounced, some minutes before eleven. For one moment he stood motionless by the door and their eyes devoured each other. Then he was across the room, kneeling down beside her chair. She bent over him, knowing that he loved her, but his love was strange and would be unlike any man's. Putting his arms round

her, he said:

"Darling, I love you and all this week I have thought of nothing else but you, you. But you should not have written to me and I should not have come. I am a cold and selfish person. No good, I am afraid, to anyone. Sometimes, I do not feel I am even alive, and I do not believe I could ever really care for anyone. I shall only make you unhappy and in time you will come to hate me. I could not bear that. I——"

He broke off and stared at her wildly. Daphne's eyes swept his exhausted white face. They were so isolated and mysterious to each other in their love, that they seemed to be back in their enchanted wood in Buckinghamshire. Only now it was neither day nor night; there reigned instead a ghostly twilight, and Daphne felt they had lost each other in the chill silence of this dimly-lit wood with its huge trees watching, motionless. Was Andrew really a statue lying white and chill on the ground which she had found and warmed for an instant into life in her arms? They belonged to each other, but they had parted upon the too ecstatic rapture of a disembodied kiss. Now they were wraiths wandering lost in a world which did not really exist. She cried out in pain at this involuntary vision.

"Oh, I wish it was the other day again, in our beechwood."

And Andrew answered, "Yes, I feel something happened then. We should have loved each other and all would have been clear." Despair marked his face while his heart already felt chilled.

Daphne pressed his dark head to her breast. She must love Andrew whatever happened, though love, sighed a voice from the shadowy heart of that distant beechwood, might be tormented and cruel. She bent down and gave that love her lips.

## *The Cross*

THERE is a place that some men know:
I cannot see the whole of it,
Nor how men come there. Long ago
Flame burst out of a secret pit
Crushing the world with such a light
The day sky fell to moonless black,
The kingly sun to hateful night
For those, once seeing, turning back:
For love so hates mortality,
Which is the providence of life,
She will not let it blessèd be
But curses it with mortal strife,
Until beside the blinding rood
Within that world-destroying pit
—Like young wolves that have tasted blood,
Of death, men taste no more of it;
So blind, in so severe a place
(All life before in the black grave)
The last alternatives they face
Of life, without life to save,
Being from all salvation weaned—
A stag charged both at heel and head;
Who would come back is turned a fiend
Instructed by the fiery dead.

ALLEN TATE

# THE ADELPHI FORUM

*Readers are invited to contribute to these pages very brief comments, criticisms and items of news that may be of specific interest to The Adelphi.*

## *Arnold Bennett*

THE life, the personality, the writings of Arnold Bennett were dealt with extensively in print in the few days following his death on March 27th last. The best was said by Mr. Frank Swinnerton; one received more dubiously the eagerly familiar tributes to "my friend Arnold" which came from less expected and less appropriate pens.

Does anything remain still to say? Only, it may be, to remark how the sense of personal loss, even for those who knew Bennett no more than through his writings, endures beyond the attentions of the newspapers. It is, indeed, as with Hardy and Conrad, permanent. These men are not replaced, in fact or in memory. They had, and they preserve, their integrity.

One was, when it came to the point, possibly a little surprised to realise how much Bennett could still mean to one. It had so long seemed evident that his best work was done, and there appeared to be so many necessary aspects of life—psychological particularly—to which in his creative work, if not in his criticism, he was blind. One put him down the child of nineteenth century liberalism to the bottom of his mind, a man whose final faith was in social rather than individual values, whose themes, tragic and comic alike, were social in their implications, and who in his personal life valued "success" if not for its own sake then as social acknowledgment. Yet his soul held a deeper vision. "Until a man can look upon the drunkard in his drunkenness, and upon the wife-beater in his brutality, with pure and calm compassion; until he is surcharged with an eager and unconquerable benevolence towards everything that lives; until he has utterly abandoned

the presumptuous practice of judging and condemning—he will never attain real content." In those words lay the source and inspiration of all his finest work, and, too, it must be added, the flaw at the heart of that which was less than fine. Bennett really reverenced all life. Every manifestation of the human spirit, in particular, seemed to fascinate him; just because a thing *was*, he could regard it as worthy of attention and exaltation. When his "passionate intensity of vision", directed to the world about him, truly penetrated to the depths beneath appearances, then he produced such work as *The Old Wives' Tale*, probably the finest English novel of our day. His lesser works, his failures, sprang from an impossible essay—the attempt to enforce the vision of pure being upon the plane of existence, to bring the illumination of eternity into the sphere of time. Thus even those testified to his integrity. His own "pure and calm compassion", his "eager and unconquerable benevolence", were entirely and vitally authentic, and though he gave them expression within the idiom of his day and the limitations of his generation, his value was, and remains, absolute.

One is bound to feel sorrow to see such a man depart. His loss is, in the strictest sense, irreparable. The world, while he lived, was a richer and more veracious place than it is to-day.

GEOFFREY WEST

## *A Doctrine and a Man*

THAT very interesting monthly review, *The Aryan Path*, proposes to some of its more responsible contemporaries a symposium on the subject: "Soul—what is it?" and publishes a descriptive diagram of the Soul which culminates in Atma, "the inseparable ray of the Universal and ONE SELF... the Self *above*, more than within, us" (*Aryan Path*, March 1931, p. 130). One must admire the ability and devoted persistence with which the directors

of *The Aryan Path* expound the doctrine of H. P. Blavatsky, but one may wonder whether the truths of that doctrine would not be at least equally easy to receive if they could be presented less dogmatically. Dogma always gives birth to violent schism, whereas Truth is tolerant of variety.

Anyone who has come in contact with J. Krishnamurti (a teacher who grew up in another theosophical School, but who has had the strength to dissociate himself from every traditional doctrine and to express his own personality in the simplest and most universal terms) will realise how truths that are as old as the hills can acquire immediacy and dynamic convincingness when they are uttered by a man who claims no authority but that of one who stands on his own feet. RICHARD REES

## *An Important Historical Novel*

HISTORICAL novels which cast a glamour are as rare as trout in a perch pond. I treasure a dozen, in memory, one of them of very recent appearance. This is E. E. Kellett's *The Conflict* (Constable, 12s.), an early autumn publication of last year. Enthusiasm and disgust with the reviewing public bid me bare my teeth and shout its praises. For of one thing I am quite certain—that, whatever its defects, it has not received anything like the attention it deserves, which may be due to the following: (*a*) Too many of its qualities are of the kind which are to-day unpopular; for it is thickly woven with religious and clerical matter, while it glitters aggressively not so much with Charles Kingsley as with the spurned Teutonic (and most heroic) world of William Morris; (*b*) it has been thrust across the reader as a saga and glorified history-book. Indeed, Mr. Kellett sub-titles it "A Saga of the Seventh Century", and then proceeds to inform us that it is nearly all true.

But while it throws searching light upon the seventh century, it develops an exciting and tragical human tale, and is very emphatically a novel.

The chief merits of it are that it gives a clear concentrated view of the early mediæval conflict between Christ and Odin, witches and saints, angels and elves, but more particularly tells the story of that great, but almost forgotten, king Egfrith and his ceaseless struggle with Bishop Wilfrid, otherwise Saint Wilfrid. And though in the process of modern observation Egfrith may have been somewhat whitewashed and Wilfrid somewhat blackened—yet how complex is the latter!—they do really live as flesh and blood before our blurred, sophisticated, intuitive eyes.

The poet Cynewulf moves eloquently through the company of clerics and warriors, and though this is a kind of romantic licence, it seems to constitute no very serious violation of the historical novelist's most sacred principles when we realize that all definite evidence as to the dates of Cynewulf's birth and death is entirely missing and that it is faintly possible he lived three quarters of a century earlier than is generally supposed and was actually a youthful contemporary of the aged Cædmon.

Moreover, the book provides an illuminating back-yard to the Wolsey and Becket arenas, showing how English nobles and monarchs and even a section of the English priesthood were always galled by the authority of Rome, insular and un-European from first to last.

Beyond that, it seems to saddle Bishop Wilfrid with rather more than his soul in Paradise may be pleased to bear. For it seems to show that, but for his jealous interference and unsoldierly influence, the Pictic invasions of the North of England would have been satisfactorily checked. So that the North of England would have remained a strong North, and the ravaging, desolating Danes of later years would have been driven back into the sea. The ultimate significance of all that is plain. Northum-

brian culture would have remained paramount and intact, the literary and linguistic centre would not have shifted, and nearly everybody to-day from the Forth to the English Channel would be speaking an English tongue somewhat resembling the dialect of Burns.

HERBERT E. PALMER

## *Educational Equality in France*

A REVIEW, in the March number of *The Adelphi*, leads me to suggest that the education of French children is not as settled or as acceptable as Mr. Murry seems to imply.

It is the facts I wish to discuss, rather than the implications. As an American, I am scarcely competent to give a valuable opinion on the British institution rather strangely called the public school. In the United States, what we call the public school system, running from the primary grade and sometimes from the kindergarten, is of course something different. It is a long established system of free schools, and it is topped by many free universities. On the whole, it is a source of pride to the population, but its faults are often flagrant, and now some of the best private schools, as we call them, are engaged in a competent effort to work out better methods, that it is hoped will be taken up, when they are proved, by the public schools. There is, however, no movement to give to the states a monopoly of education.

In France, the equalitarian movement in education is in a militant stage, and has been for some years a sharp issue. The Communists, naturally, wish a complete national monopoly of education. They are able, nevertheless, to work with elements in the more moderate left which are pushing toward what is called l'Ecole Unique, but are not asking for forcible suppression of private schools. It is not, indeed, deemed necessary. As France has not the money to spend on education that is spent in the United States, it is widely assumed that in so far as free education is offered by the nation, to that extent will private education in the same grades and in the same fields die out. The only force used is that since 1882 religious instruction is ended in all school buildings, and members of religious bodies are not allowed to teach. The latter provision is to some extent defeated, though not seriously;

there is considerable teaching by women who would be nuns if it were not for this provision.

The successful fight, completed in 1882, for a new system in the schools, had two main objects. One was anti-Catholic, the other was absence of fees in the primary grade. During the several years of parliamentary debate and investigation leading up to these changes, one speaker referred back to 1833, when Guizot had said: "The state ought to furnish a primary education to all and make a present of it to those who cannot pay." It took nearly fifty years to convince the majority of the voters that it would be better to take over the whole cost than to leave the well-do-do with no temptation to send their children to the public primary schools, since they had to pay in any case.

During the argument, one speaker declared: "We wish to do away with the distinctions that now exist between the child who pays and the one who does not."

"If that is the case," interrupted a Senator of the Right, "ask for the same system in secondary and higher education."

There were various cries from the Left: "Don't worry. We will. That will come later."

Referring back to this answer, M. Edouard Herriot wrote in 1931: "The promise thus made should be carried out by us. Let us fight for the freedom of secondary education." When he was Minister of Education, M. Herriot put this proposal to the front, but it is probably many years from fulfilment. In this field there is much more conservatism in France than in the United States, Switzerland, and Denmark. Even in the free primary grades the children of the prosperous professional families are, as a rule, missing; they start their education in private schools at six.

Even in the domain of general theoretical ideals, where there is enough agreement to hold together a strong fighting block in Parliament, there are sharp differences to face later. One of the most interesting has to do with selection. As the state undertakes the expense of secondary and higher education, is there to be selection? If so, by whom? By the rough rule of examination? What are to be the rôles of fitness, of the child's desire, of the family choice? Some of the best children develop slowly; how long is the state to carry them along? There is no opinion, as far as I know, in favour of carrying them all

iiscellaneously, subject to moderate tests, up to twenty-two or three, s we do in the United States, but I am not familiar with the Com-iunist documents. Reports and brochures are numerous, representing very branch of theory; but in book form, singularly enough, there is ttle. A Catholic volume, *Le Vrai Visage de l'Ecole Unique*, was ublished in 1930, and in spite of its bias gives much information about rojects and the relative strength of various groups. On the other side, *'Ecole de la République* was published in 1931. The compact group 1 Parliament of about a hundred has been able, in spite of its differing iews, to work since 1927 for an extension of gratuity into secondary ducation.

NORMAN HAPGOOD

# *Verifiable Psychology*

*To the Editor of The Adelphi.*

IR,

I have read Mr. Murry's note on my article. By "verifiable psycho-ogy" I merely mean statistically verifiable as existing in such and such uantities in such and such a proportion of human beings. Mr. Murry eems to assume, quite gratuitously, that by "verified" I mean "ex-lained"; of course I do not.

"The supreme need of Blake's being was to forgive and to be for-iven." Science, if I may be permitted to use the indelicate word, erifies the fact that this is really the supreme need of Blake's being and to a greater or lesser extent the need of all men's being); and the cientific moralist frames his ethic accordingly. This is all I mean by n ethic based on a verifiable and verified psychology. An ethic based n an unverified psychology is one like that of the Thebaid, for ex-mple; an ethic which universalised the statistically abnormal longing or intense suffering and proceeded to set it up as the sole valid ethic. Why Mr. Murry should object to men of science trying to make a escriptive statement of the way in which men do in fact feel about the vorld and to scientific moralists making use of their data to frame a enerally acceptable ethic, I cannot imagine.

I have no time, and a strong disinclination, to enlarge on my own ersonal experiences of "the delights and terrors of living". But I beg Mr. Murry to believe that "not every one that saith Lord, Lord shall

enter the kingdom of heaven"; and that, conversely, heaven is not exclusively reserved for the Lord-Lorders. One can speak very seriously in other terms than those of pulpit eloquence.

I remain, Sir, yours, &c.,

ALDOUS HUXLEY

# *God's English (Business) Men*

"We could not expect *always* to have the best coal seams in the world and to be the world's market for steel and cotton. But this does not mean that we cannot still take a full and vital part in the trade of the world. It would be touching on politics to suggest what means should be taken politically to help on this much desired trade revival, but I can only say as a Christian, that I cannot believe for a moment we have so completely forfeited the trust God put in our nation that we are to be relegated to a third rate power among the nations of the earth." (*From the Bishop of London's Easter Letter.*)

# REVIEWS

## *Mr. Murry's Lawrence*

SON OF WOMAN. The Story of D. H. Lawrence. *By John Middleton Murry.* (Cape) 10*s.* 6*d.*

EVEN those who question Mr. Murry's philosophy must admit that everything which he writes is dictated by an inward necessity. And never was that necessity more painfully convincing than in his latest volume. It is painful, at times intolerably painful, to read. It must have been an agony to write. And no one in Mr. Murry's position could have written it unless he had felt the demands of an overwhelming necessity. This is his justification. It is that which sustains us, as it sustained him, "when the sense of doom, once we touch the quick of it with our souls, is unbearable." It is that which finally frees us from the oppression which has settled on our spirits like a dark and stifling cloud, and delivers us into the light in which necessity is no longer terrible but awesomely beautiful, because the spirit is vindicated and the wounding accidents of time are no longer of any account.

To vindicate Lawrence's spirit not only from the world which has misunderstood him but from his own spiritual self-slaughter, his own compulsive need to kill the thing he loved and to do to death his own very soul—that is the task which Mr. Murry has undertaken. And no one was better qualified to perform it. Yet his very qualifications must have provided his basic difficulty. Readers of *The Adelphi* will not need telling that he was Lawrence's friend and that his friendship was broken, and ended in an alienation which was not personal, but the inevitable result of a clash of two orders of consciousness. This book is the fruit of that opposition on the impersonal level and devotion on the personal. But the problem was how to reconcile and transcend them. To expose the falsehood in Lawrence's philosophy and the self-deception and ultimately self-defeat which conditioned it was, on the personal level, to betray the man. To conceal or minimise the deadliness of his explicit message out of tenderness for the friend was, on the impersonal level, to betray the truth.

In fact, the apparently opposing claims of impersonal truth and personal tenderness can only be reconciled and transcended by that

"understanding which is love, indeed," and which, as Mr. Mu writes elsewhere, is the only "justice in the world worth having, a it is neither anger nor pity, nor judgment." For the most part he l written out of such love and has his inevitable reward in profou imaginative understanding. But the strain imposed upon him was v great. And there are moments when he reacted from a personal sy pathy, which tortured him, into a ruthlessness of analysis, which touched by antipathy. He falls into the judgment which he has decri not because he has failed to suffer with Lawrence, but because he l suffered too much. And then in contrition he tries to restore t balance by a rather extravagant hero-worship. Doubtless the extra gance is more apparent than real. For a moment his emotion is i perfectly controlled. It fails to be wholly concentrated with thought in an act of imaginative apprehension. And the result is a p sage which is slightly falsified by a sort of hysteria. I feel it, for ample, in the following, which significantly enough succeeds a resol exposure of what lay beneath the mystical 'Holy Ghost' and 'her soul' with which Lawrence strove to invest Aaron Sisson:

"Let me not be misunderstood. I believe, and very deeply, t Lawrence *was* a leader, or rather that in generations to come he will found to be a leader. But he was not at all a leader in the mode which dreamed. He was, or will be, a leader in the mode which, with his li he utterly repudiated. He was a leader after the fashion of the m who leads because he suffers, who leads because he is crucified. 'I, I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.' This was the mode in wh Lawrence was destined to become a leader. And he lifted himself u The inexorable compulsion was upon him of uttering himself, of e posing himself, as perhaps no man has been uttered and expos before. One is aghast at the completeness of his self-revelatio aghast and awed and finally overcome with a passion of love a reverence for that which he was. His escapes, his disguises, his repudi tions, his denials—these are all part of the man—*the form of h* prayer that the cup might pass from him."

In a real sense, this passage is true and the whole of Mr. Murr interpretation of Lawrence confirms its truth. Yet it is not, I thin any conventional scruple which makes me recoil from the Gosp allusions. They are, I feel, misleading. Lawrence may be regarded as tragic hero. Mr. Murry convinces me that he was one. But he was t

hero of a Pagan drama, not a Christian Mystery. He is of the order of Œdipus, not of Jesus. There is a sense in which, through the very extremity of his efforts to plunge himself down, he 'lifted himself up', but it was at the compulsion of a destiny of which he was the tortured victim, not the willing affirmer. His suffering was not a gift to humanity by one who was a freeman through perfect submission to the spiritual. It was the nemesis that dogged a physical self-enslavement, universally significant only by its preternatural intensity and completeness.

No one knows this better than Mr. Murry, who demonstrates towards the end of his book how Jesus and Lawrence stand over against each other in naked opposition. "On the Cross, the man who kept his spirit whole, and let his flesh be crucified; standing beneath, the man who would keep whole his flesh, and let his spirit be crucified."

Yet the passage I have quoted would leave on many readers the impression that the man who was crucified by sex and the man who was crucified by the world were leaders of the same order. It invites the very misunderstanding which Mr. Murry sets out to remove. And I feel the same when, after asking what Lawrence would have been if he had not suffered this destiny of love turned into hatred, he answers, "He would have been like Jesus, nay, he would have been Jesus." It may well be that the essential truth of men is revealed as much through what they deny as through what they affirm, and the more frenzied their denial of love is, the more intensely they are at heart possessed by it. Mr. Murry proves convincingly that that was so with Lawrence.

Nevertheless, I feel that, in describing 'the Lawrence who might have been' as another Jesus, Mr. Murry is allowing his sympathy to dictate an extravagant fancy rather than a true image. Obviously, such a claim cannot be verified. We can only accept or reject it according to our estimate of the spiritual genius in Lawrence which was so tragically denied. But if it was of the order of Jesus, it is rather surprising that even in the book in which, in Mr. Murry's view, he came nearer than anywhere else to consciously exploring the way for us and asserting the fundamentals of a true Science of Life, his spiritual insight is so incomplete. Mr. Murry describes the *Fantasia of the Unconscious* as marking "the pinnacle of Lawrence's achievement; the halcyon moment of apparent harmony before the signs of disintegration begin to show." He admits that the unsolved inward division lies deeply

concealed beneath the *Fantasia*, yet he claims that it shows that "Lawrence knew what was wrong; he could point out the way for future generations to put it right; but he could not avert his own destiny. He was the spiritual lover, who knew the doom that overtakes spiritual love." It is questionable, however, whether a being so fatally divided as Lawrence was could possess or communicate the degree of 'life-wisdom' which Mr. Murry here attributes to him. Elsewhere, indeed, he rightly emphasises the fact that the great spiritual teachers have invariably struggled in the wilderness to achieve unity in themselves and achieved it before returning to the world with their message. And in fact Lawrence's *Fantasia* reveals both the deep personal insight into the riven natural man and the imperfect understanding of the spiritual man and of that 'spiritual love' which is not doomed, that we should expect. Mr. Murry claims that "he holds the balance quite evenly between the 'spiritual' and the 'sensual' man. We have to be fully developed in both modes to be full men. What he insists upon, rightly, is that the'spiritual' mode is not intellectual." And in a sense, of course, this is true. The *Fantasia* is a splendid exposure of that destructive 'intellectual mentality' which has eaten so disastrously into modern life. But in saving the 'sensual' man from the 'mental', Lawrence seems to me to have dangerously sensualised the 'spiritual' man. He discovered in man four centres, two sensual and two spiritual. 'Body', Mr. Murry writes, corresponds to the former, 'Heart' to the latter, whereas 'Mind' was "only an instrument. It was the means by which—in this matter of individual self-achievement—Body and Heart, the sensual and the spiritual centres attained to their own self-expression." But to me it seems clear that, in the violence of his reaction against the false tyranny of the exclusive intellect, Lawrence was led here to sin against the light of a higher Reason, that creative Reason or Imagination which Blake described as 'the Divine Power in Every Man' and Spinoza as 'the intellectual love of God.' 'Mind' of this order cannot be dismissed as a 'subsidiary mode of experience' and it is arguable that 'Body and Heart' can never truly attain to their own self-expression except in obedience to it. Surely, in reducing Mind to such a subsidiary position, in denying to it the same right to its own self-expression as the Body and Heart, Lawrence betrayed the same physical limitations as dictated his belief that "the self-consciousness and sex-idea" could be "burned out of one, cauterised out bit by bit,

and the self made whole again, and at last free", by compelling the "amiable spouse, who has got herself so stuck in her own head" to become mindless in her surrender. Elsewhere, Mr. Murry insists with admirable force upon the fatality of Lawrence's attempts to evade the mental consciousness. But here he is ambiguous. He admits that "it would not have occurred to me, nor is it in accordance with the mystic tradition or with truth itself, to call the objective knowledge of spiritual love pre-mental. But that," he adds, "is no great objection (*sic*). . . Mind has to be settled; but the foundations of the self are well and truly laid."

Yet even if the primitive self is truly grounded, its growth through consciousness into pure being depends essentially on the right ordering of the Mind. And to reduce to a mere appendix the faculty which above all determines its human significance and which should reflect what Boehme called 'the eternal and intellectual sun' was surely to evade the problem. The underlying assumption is that a fall into sin is preventable, if Body and Heart are allowed to develop organically and without any cerebral interference, that the state of division of which Lawrence experienced the agonies was a remediable accident, the result of human folly, parental sin, and mental education. In Mr. Murry's words Lawrence wrote the *Fantasia* "to save children from being bullied and warped and destroyed by the vicious ideal".

But surely it is not so simple as this. Certainly, Lawrence was cruelly and crassly warped by circumstance. Certainly, the sickness of the modern world has been viciously aggravated by 'idealisms' that reflect the very disintegration which they claim to cure. But the division of which Lawrence was the victim is in a less intense form a fact of universal experience on the path of spiritual advance. May it not be that spiritual advance is impossible without it, that as our first birth into physical life involves the pain of division, our rebirth into spiritual life must do the same? And although, as our 'life-wisdom' grows, we may learn more clearly how to renew our being in unity and so be spared such tortures as Lawrence knew, the basic conditions will remain the same. And certainly one of these is that having fallen into sin, we cannot fall out of it. An ascent is required, although the necessary condition of such ascent is that bowing down of the self, with its divided faculties, of which Mr. Murry writes with such insight and conviction. And in that ascent the regenerated reason and will, of

which Lawrence takes so little account, must play the most important part of all.

I cannot, therefore, agree that in the *Fantasia* Lawrence "holds the balance quite evenly between the 'spiritual' and the 'sensual' man". Rather, like *Aaron's Rod* with which Mr. Murry links it, it strikes me as "one more manifestation of that strange hybridisation between spirituality and sensuality which is constant in Lawrence's work". And since, even when he came nearest to discovering a true science of life, he failed to reconcile truly the spiritual and the biological, I think that to identify 'the Lawrence who might have been' with Jesus is misleading, except in so far as every son of woman is potentially a son of God.

Even, however, if we dispute at times Mr. Murry's estimate of Lawrence's essential insight into the problem of integration, we cannot praise too highly his astonishing power of divining and defining the inward process of disintegration through which Lawrence passed from a distracted living soul into something at once bodiless and sub-human, a 'naked nerve on the air', an uneasy ghost, wandering in limbo, and 'a man dead to the spirit, swirled aimlessly in the flux of unsatisfied and unsatisfiable desire.' And terrible as this revelation is, it represents a great service both to Lawrence and to all those people who have listened to the voice, not of his suffering, but of his hatred, who have mistaken a death-agony for a gospel. Lawrence, Mr. Murry writes, was "in speech, the sole prophet of the phallic being, in truth its last and most implacable enemy". His 'hardy, indomitable male' was a wish-fulfilment, springing from his own physical weakness and frustrated tenderness; and "all the insistence on sex and the blood-consciousness, which is the constant obsession of all his books, and by which he is generally known to fame or notoriety, was, in his own secret judgment, a self-violation, a sin against the light". The stages and the relative causes and conditions of this self-violation, by which he tore himself to pieces because he could not make himself spiritually and so physically whole, are traced with extraordinary certainty and insight from the fatal mother-attachment of his boyhood which, by prematurely awakening the spiritual in him, incapacitated him as a lover, through the crucifixion by and into sex of his manhood, through the despairing search for fulfilment with a man, to the final surrender to the 'dark God', which was no more than an imaginative

solace for his own incurable distress.

Mr. Murry ends with the words "That which you sought to strangle, you are doomed to bring to birth, in men." And the justification of this harrowing but profoundly illuminating book is that it gives back to men the love and the truth which Lawrence sought to strangle, that it makes effective the suffering which he endured. This 'betrayal' was, indeed, the one thing which Lawrence lacked. By means of it the intolerable burden of our disintegration which he bore becomes a gift to men, a gift not of darkness, but of light. All that he was driven in anguish to deny is affirmed. He trod the way of Death that others may draw near to the tree of Life. But without Mr. Murry his death-in-life might never have become a life-in-death.

HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

# *The Unanswered Question*

ESSAYS IN ORDER: RELIGION AND CULTURE. *By Jacques Maritain*; CRISIS IN THE WEST. *By Peter Wust*; CHRISTIANITY AND THE NEW AGE. *By Geoffrey Dawson* (Sheed & Ward) 2*s.* 6*d.* each.

I HAVE been reading a series of excellent "Essays in Order" in which various Catholic writers of distinction—Jacques Maritain, Peter Wust, and Geoffrey Dawson—give their views of the situation of the modern world; I have also been reading Thomas Mann's remarkable speech after the victory of the Hitler party at the last German elections in the current *Criterion*, and Mr. Eliot's "Commentary" in the same number; and I can trace an affinity between them all.

How is a responsible German to bear himself politically? asks Thomas Mann, and finally answers that he must support the Social-Democrats, and a policy based on a Franco-German understanding, or even alliance. But on the way to that conclusion he glances "with a certain envy" at the German Catholics, "who are well provided, even politically, in the bosom of the Church". Yet Dr. Wust, who really is a German Catholic, is ignorant of this admirable provision for himself. He is profoundly disquieted "by the tremendous burden of fatality which at present presses so hard upon us", and he does not mean the Treaty of Versailles. He means "the entire machinery of that civilisation which we serve". To his question, "What are we to do?" it is

quite irrelevant to answer "Vote for the Centre Party". What are we to do? asks M. Maritain. What are we to do? asks Mr. Eliot. "How far is it possible for mankind to accept industrialisation without spiritual harm?"

I cannot assume an attitude of detachment about this question, by which I am equally disquieted. But I think it does need to be pointed out, and even to be emphasised, that the fact that all these three writers have become Orthodox Christians, has not diminished by a single scruple their fundamental perplexity. They know no better than I what we are to do. What they derive from their religion in this regard is evidently at best a conviction that the time of tribulation, which seems to them inevitable, is part of the Divine plan. It may be that they share M. Maritain's mystical faith in the eternality of the Christian Church. But, practically, as creatures of the world of existence, their despair is unmitigated. Says Dr. Wust:

> Even the man who withdraws from the contemporary world into a lonely Thebaid soon discovers that the tentacles of civilisation reach him there, for the monasteries of to-day make use of the comforts of modern civilisation, however determined their rejection of the spirit which that civilisation represents.

But how far is it possible to reject the spirit which modern civilisation represents, while continuing to be dependent upon its products? Of what real value is such a rejection?

So M. Maritain sombrely looks forward to a near time when Christian asceticism will be the only possible way of life for a man who looks before and after. And in this he is consistent. But one does not need to be orthodox to feel the inward necessity of repudiating the machine in act as well as word; or to have a conception of the good life, in which the joys of the spirit are more precious than the comforts of the flesh. But who is willing to pay the price of repudiating the machine? And who believes that such a total repudiation of the machine will be effective, or even possible?

I confess I do not know whether I believe this or not. But I am more certain of the negative proposition. I do not believe that any form of organised Christianity will ever master and control the machine; and I believe that if our machine-civilisation continues its autonomous growth, the very roots of the religious realisation will wither. For the *roots of religion are in the earth:* in that immediate knowledge of birth

and death, of human impotence before the elements—the natural piety which is the heritage of the tillers of the soil. I suspect that if the essential human sanity, which religion really means as distinct from this or that orthodoxy, is to be preserved within a nation as a whole, then that nation must remain predominantly agricultural, and predominantly peasant. The earth is the mother of sanity.

The English people is now very far removed from the earth, and from the sanity which is religion. The modern movements towards the Church among intellectuals seem to be a mere burying of the head in the sand. The Church is totally without a policy, or even an opinion on this matter; moreover, it is completely involved in the modern machine-civilisation. All it can offer to the individual, the individual can receive without sacrificing one atom of his independence. On those vital issues of life, which are peculiar to the modern world, the Church—whether the Roman or another—has no advice, no counsel, no command. The strictest Churchman to-day will not be, by virtue of his Churchmanship, one step nearer the good life than his uncovenanted brother, who has reached a certain level of spiritual attainment, to which adhesion to the Church will bring him no nearer than his own unaided insight into his own experience.

I understand, and deeply sympathise with, the motives which drive men back into the Church; but I contend that that motion is irrelevant to our urgent needs to-day. I find ample evidence of that irrelevance in the undiminished disquietude of the Christian apologists. Take Mr. Eliot's crucial question: "How far is it possible for mankind to accept industrialisation without spiritual harm?" It is *the* question to-day. What answer has the Church to it? To my knowledge, none at all. It has never dared to face the question. I do not blame it for that; and I know that if the question were faced we should be no nearer to an answer. But on this question I find the most confused thinking even in a Catholic so intellectually acute as M. Maritain. He assures us first that the cause of the untoward development of modern industrial civilisation is the lapse from the Catholic faith at the time of the Renaissance; second, that the condition of the modern world is now utterly intolerable; and third that the Church is perfectly aware of the nature of the modern regime, and has simply decided to give it a trial. To me it is quite impossible to accept all these propositions at once: the first and third cancel each other out. Nor can I accept either separately.

I do not believe that the lapse from the Catholic faith is the cause of modern industrialism; nor that the Church is deliberately making trial of the modern system. As for the latter, I believe that the Church slipped into modern industrialism with precisely the same lack of awareness as institutions less divine; and for the former, that so far from being a cause, the lapse from Catholicism was at most a concomitant of the process which has culminated in modern industrialism. It was a symptom of the restlessness and hunger for experiment which is fundamental to the European nature. The endeavour to satisfy that hunger has changed the face of the world. The conditions of human existence a short hundred years ago were nearer to those of the Middle Ages, or even of the Roman Empire, than they are to the conditions to-day.

But the eternal verities of human experience remain unchanged? That is only partly true. In the first place, the industrialisation of life has made a new and profound cleavage between work and enjoyment; one need not indulge the illusion that in the good old days everybody enjoyed his work. But it is roughly true that in those days his work engaged him as an independent being, as it can no longer; and as an independent being he was capable of amusing himself, if he needed amusement. In the modern world, the provision of amusement is one of the greatest of all the great industries. Speaking largely, man has lost his self-sufficiency in work and in play. Again, in passing from an agricultural to an industrial order, man has lost contact with the fundamental rhythms of life, the animal patience which is in many respects the equivalent of the highest spiritual wisdom. The eternal verities may be unchanged, but the channels by which they were apprehended by the great majority of men are stopped. The strength of the Christian Church in the old days lay in two things: a real correspondence of its rhythms and its rituals with the rhythms of life as immediately experienced, and the practical uniformity of the social and economic organisation throughout Europe. To-day, we appear to be approaching a new and totally different economic uniformity, with which the Christian Church as an expression of life has no vital correspondence whatever. Intellectuals may return to the Church, but the bulk of humanity moves inevitably away from it. And I find it significant indeed that Mr. Eliot would recommend the Christian faith because it is difficult, as the refuge of an élite. How easy, and indeed inevitable, is this parting of

the common man from the Church is witnessed by the situation in Russia, where it would have seemed that the separation of the people from the Church would have encountered more serious obstacles than in any other European country. Yet it has been accomplished, and with astonishing ease. To say that the separation has been effected by compulsion is to say nothing, for the compulsion could not have been effective upon a nation of a hundred million people if its Christian piety had been profound.

Under the modern economic system, the Christian Church is no longer natural to man; it is the expression of a different kind of life, and it cannot be incorporated into the new one. For one intellectual who returns to the Church, there will be a thousand, or a hundred thousand, backsliders among the common people; and the backsliders are more significant not merely numerically, but even individually, than the new adherents, for their secession follows from an instinctive sense of a vital incompatability between the Church and themselves, and is inevitable, whereas the adherence of the intellectual proceeds from strain and desperation, and not from vital necessity. With more spiritual endurance, he might have chosen differently.

Still, we have no answer to the question: What are we to do? Dr. Wust's final answer is: *Crede et fac quod vis; ama et fac quod vis; ora et fac quod vis.* Which is, of course, no answer, in one sense. And in another sense, the only possible answer. But in the sense in which it is the only possible answer, one does not need to return to the Church to make it, or to accept it. Any man of spiritual attainment knows that the burden of decision is upon himself, and yet that he is not called to bear it alone. But the one thing I chiefly regret, in this time when the action of the conscious individual is supremely significant, is that of those (themselves not many) who have shown themselves most aware of the issues now being obscurely decided not a few should have turned backward to a Church whose awareness is less than their own. There was a command upon them: that they should endure to the end, even to their own destruction. They hastened to be saved.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY

## *Critique of Concepts*

CRITIQUE OF PHYSICS. *By L. L. Whyte* (Kegan Paul) 10*s*. 6*d*.

THEOLOGIANS and others have recently talked much nonsense about the alleged indeterminacy of modern physics. If some physical problems appear to be indeterminate it is because we are trying to classify phenomena in unsuitable categories. Many scientific concepts have a range of usefulness restricted in ways which were not apparent when they were first devised. Thus a "ray of light" might be defined as possessing certain properties towards which the properties of finite beams tend as they become smaller and smaller ***but not too small.*** The concept was introduced into optics before it became possible to show that light passing through a very small hole behaved in a way quite different from the hypothetical behaviour of "rays". A "ray" is a commonsense notion in so far as it is designed to give a systematic account of common sense-data. But it is not a thing perceived directly, and if ever the use of diffraction gratings, etc., became common in ordinary life it would be as misleading a notion to the layman as it is to the physicist. The increasing practical applications of science are rapidly altering the content of "common sense-data", and if men are not to find themselves helpless in a world of miracles and devil-boxes, they must attempt to follow the revision of scientific concepts which is taking place.

When Rabelais wrote of the universe as that which has its centre everywhere and its circumference nowhere he was trying, like other popularisers from Cusanus down to Bruno, to explain the nature of infinite space. To-day that notion is ingrained in common thought and common speech and popularisers sweat blood in efforts to reverse the work of Rabelais and Kepler.

Science is a game played in accordance with certain rules which are the same whether we regard logic as a reflection of experience (a kind of elementary science) or take it as primary and assert that a certain amount of logical order appears in experience. It aims at order and economy of thought precisely as art aims at an analogous order and economy of emotion. Both attempt to increase man's power over his environment by suitably organising his responses. Contradiction, indeterminacy and ambiguity (all of which have appeared in modern physics) must therefore be eliminated, and we cannot accept the

judgment of Mr. Edmund Wilson who, in his admirable study of those writers whose attitude seems to him to resemble that of the self-centred and intellectually remote Axel, writes:

> "The philosophical mathematicians . . . seem to have developed, no doubt from the same social and political causes, a similar metaphysical hypertrophy: consider the disproportionate size of the shadow-structure which such a writer as Eddington tries to base on some new modification of physical theory, itself suggested on most uncertain evidence."

The evidence of indeterminacy (in terms of accepted concepts) is not uncertain; and even if it were, the appearance of the action quantum $h$ in the investigation of microscopic phenomena is a hint that some lower limit to the fine-structure of phenomena has been reached, just as the appearance of $c$ (the velocity of light) as an upper limit to velocities showed that notions of infinite space and of the simultaneity of two distant events were meaningless. Heisenberg has suggested that the other universal constants $e$ (the electronic charge), $m$ (the mass of the electron) and $M$ (the mass of the proton) symbolise other restrictions not yet apparent. That is, he suggests that physicists are using concepts which allow them to ask meaningless questions.

Mr. Whyte's *Critique* states the position clearly and enunciates the conditions which any theory based on necessary and sufficient concepts must satisfy. Classical theory (e.g. Newtonian mechanics) paid no attention to the *scale* of phenomena: the equations contained no constants representing universal lengths, and, therefore, systems of differing sizes were expected to show a formal similarity. This similarity disappears in Relativity and Quantum physics and we no longer expect the behaviour of cricket balls to be completely analogous to that of their constituent particles.

Mr. Whyte suggests that physical theory may be unified in a structural theory based on a consideration of measuring-rods (crystal lattices) and clocks (molecular vibrations). This would eliminate the conception of length measurement relative to moving systems and go beyond the relativity theory which treated measuring rods and clocks as unanalysable conceptions. This use of "proper" lengths and times inherent in the structure in place of relative lengths and times recalls the two methods of classical hydrodynamics. Those treatments are

equivalent, but Mr. Whyte suggests that his "Unitary Theory" would differ from Relativity by giving space a status superior to that of time. "Local time" would be a parameter determined always by measurements of distance and time, as an extended independent variable, would be eliminated. *Critique of Physics* is full of exciting reading for the layman, and for the mathematician it contains extremely interesting hints of a new calculus—presumably a kind of *analysis situs*—which may be of very great importance.

Observable space-time phenomena can be reduced to pairs of causally-linked coincidences: in Mr. Whyte's scheme, pairs of causal tracks would not be regarded as describable in terms of four co-ordinates at all, but would be called courses. The differential coefficient "velocity at an instant" would be replaced by the ratio of finite distances and times. The fact that coincidences are only approximate is not discussed in detail, but it is easily seen that a "course calculus" using only local time would imply an asymmetrical before-after relationship for each pair of coincidences and so facilitate the discussion of irreversible changes and the finding of concepts which would be of service in biology as well as physics. Mr. Whyte rightly says that "it is possible that a type of order exists in organisms which cannot be reduced to those special types of order that physics finds in its elementary units". Similarly, the notion of moral responsbility is not identical with that of physical causality.

MICHAEL ROBERTS

# *England's Crisis*

ENGLAND'S CRISIS. *By André Siegfried*, translated from the French by Doris and H. H. Hemming. (Cape) 10s. 6*d*.

HAD this book been written for the French public alone, it would possibly have made less painful reading for the Englishman. M. Siegfried has not only admiration for this country but genuine affection, and he desires above all things to speak to us and rouse us. To do this, he feels he must scold us. This is rather a pity, for it gives the Englishman the chance to accuse him of having a malicious tongue, and this accusation has not failed to appear in certain quarters. If this charge is unjust, the author is, nevertheless, partially to blame for it. He does, it is true, again and again pay generous tribute to our qualities, but in the matter of indictment he has not quite the literary skill for

such a task. In his desire to bring home the charge, he hammers too much, and as a result the workmanship is a little coarse. In preaching any theme, repetition is not only defensible but commendable; but it is up to an author to make each repetition seem necessary or he is bound to be irritating. It is important to keep this in mind when reading *England's Crisis* or a charge of clumsiness may be magnified into a charge of bad faith. If the author's wording was as clever as his intentions were kindly, his criticism would offend (or at any rate *should* offend) no one.

M. Siegfried has much to say on English post-war mentality, and the last and best part of the book deals with England's international relationships, but it is throughout fundamentally an economic treatise, and the interest centres on the lost export trade of the country. Its main plea is for economy, more work and less pay, and its most bitter remarks are directed against the dole. Though its criticism embraces all classes and parties, its outlook is basically conservative. In Socialism, the author seems to see only *remedial* socialism, he ignores the fact that it has also a constructive side. In accordance with this bias, the question of over-production, though it is just mentioned, receives no treatment whatever. If the economic struggle of life could formerly be symbolised by two dogs and a bone, it is now to be symbolised by two dogs and three bones. What the dogs are now growling about is which of them shall sell the other the spare bone. But M. Siegfried sees our present economic problems only in terms of the old-fashioned competition. If we will only consent to a lower standard of life, he thinks, we shall perhaps again be able to export freely and all would then be well. No attempt is made to deal with the Socialist answer that if the standard of living is lowered, the gap between consuming power and producing power is still further widened to the detriment of trade. It is extraordinary that so sincere a writer should have neglected an argument so commonly advanced. The reason for it is probably to be found in his ardent desire that England, if she is forced to choose between belonging to the New World or the Old, should choose the latter. And if she is going to belong to Europe, he believes she must resign herself to a Continental standard of living.

It is interesting to compare M. Siegfried's opinions with those of Dr. Oswald Spengler. In *Prussianism and Socialism*, a small book published a few years ago, the latter studies the contrast between the

capitalistic spirit as typified by the Englishman and the Socialistic spirit as typified by the Prussian. His case could perhaps be summed up not unfairly in the following table:

| | *Prussian* | *Englishman* |
|---|---|---|
| *Milieu* | The State | Society |
| *Ideal* | Authority | Freedom |
| *Technique* | Discipline | Manners |
| *Motive force* | Sense of Duty | Sense of Adventure |
| *Goal* | Rank | Wealth |
| *Result* | Socialism | Capitalism |

Many will disagree with the meaning thus given to Socialism and Capitalism, but, anyhow, the contrast is valid. To Spengler, Western Europe seems to be moving in a Socialistic direction, and thus the future is with the Germans rather than with the English, who are still struggling for a world of free-trade and private enterprise. He admits that we have lost some of our liberties and are to lose more in the Socialistic tide; but England's crisis lies for him in whether we can or whether we cannot swallow this bitter pill. We thus have two foreigners speaking to us in pessimistic tones. The one tells us that we are undermining our national morale by Socialistic pampering, the other that we are battling with deep-rooted individualism against a modern Socialistic conception of the state. Which of them is right, and which conception of Socialism is the more instructive? There is a measure of truth on both sides, but Spengler's is the bigger and broader view.

One's final objection to Siegfried's book is that it is too exclusively a work of economics. It is all very well in political discussions for money to have the last word. The trouble is that it is apt to have the first word too as well as all the words in the middle. But England can only be saved from her present situation by something which is not purely economic, namely, a great campaign of national reconstruction which can be pursued *for its own sake.* It is very doubtful whether the nation can ever be deeply stirred by economics unless their more selfish interests are first appealed to. Free trade, which from one side seems so unselfish, had the dear loaf for its missionary. On the other hand, if Siegfried's message is one which cannot excite the imagination of the English people as a whole, is it conceivable that they could be stirred by a constructive ideal? Spengler would think it doubtful, but I for

one still hope. Certainly, it has never been tried. No government since the war has set about to teach reconstruction as a practical ideal. It is true that there are two party programmes in the field to-day which advance a plea for the re-equipment of the country, but even here the economic outlook is much too preponderant. From 1914 to 1918, when England had her back to the wall, economics had to take a second place. The result was that economic ways and means were found to do something which was not economic in itself. The war was from an economic point of view preposterous—yet we got through, no worse than badly scorched by four years of intensive destruction. How then should we emerge from a like period of equally intensive construction ?

And what are we to construct? At least an effective transport system. Rationalisation of industry, important as it is, cannot by itself be the object of great national effort, for the reason that it is only directly visible to the workers in the industry concerned, that is, by those who in the first place *suffer from it.* Transport on the other hand can excite everybody. At this point there is an objection which must be summarily dealt with. If we do succeed in going from London to Manchester an hour or two quicker, what are we going to do with the time thus saved? Might we not have been just as happy on the road or in the train? These questions might seem valid if put by a Yogi who can meditate equally well anywhere, but even from him the sneer is rather mean considering the speed at which he delights to fling his astral body across continents. As for the Englishman who asks them, they betray the emptiness of a tired spirit. The same argument may be accommodated to discredit any enterprise whatsoever. Unless the mind can be touched by construction itself, it will in the end find nothing worth while. If a great moral accusation is to be brought against this age, it will not be grounded on the liberty of its *mœurs* but on its readiness to withdraw its hand from the plough.

*Ce qui importe, ce n'est point les personnes mais les choses.* The interesting thing about Carnot's saying is that it was a favourite maxim of one of the most inspired of preachers, Nietzsche. What England in her crisis needs to-day is a generation who would scorn to save their souls until the traffic can move properly along Oxford Street. The more frivolous to-day are holding with both hands to their pleasures, while the more serious are holding with both hands to their souls; the re-

mainder think in terms of private profit and loss.

> "Nature loves better a wheelwright who
> Dreams all night of wheels, and a groom
> Who is part of his horse; for she is
> Full of work and these are her hands."

Emerson was right; but where are her hands to-day?

GEOFFREY SAINSBURY

## *East Africa Now*

AFRICA VIEW. *By Julian Huxley* (Chatto & Windus) 15*s.*

THIS book of East African travel is worthy of a place beside that old epic, *The Great Rift Valley*, of Professor Gregory; and the camera now provides an aid that was denied to the explorer of 1893. The one book, like the other, is the work of a scientist, and the scientist is one's most stimulating companion when adventuring in wild places and unknown country. The thirty-six delightfully short chapters of *Africa View* deal with the regions where enlightenment and illiberalism are fighting for little less than the destiny of Black Africa. Professor Huxley is a sympathetic observer as he moves among East Africa's bizarre collection of human types, a greater diversity, we are told, than is to be found in the whole of Europe. It is symptomatic of much that is to follow that on his second page there is reference to people who are "half naked and very industrious". He comments on the orderliness of native markets; he recognises in the antics of a professional entertainer, at an African wedding, the "pleasant impudence" of a medieval jester. The semi-pastoral Wabugwe suddenly helped him to realise more fully the life of the Hebrew patriarchs: "What was Abraham but a whiter and more religious Masai?" He found the distribution of irrigation-water to African crops in one region to be regulated by elaborate and detailed customary law of unknown age—a system working without disputes and without white intervention.

When, among these good folk, he encounters the present-day intrusion of masterful white colonists, "indifferent to any possible human relationship between white and black", an occasional searing passage appears. The existing relation is almost solely economic, that of employer and labourer, with few signs of personal contact. "Little or

nothing is being done to foster a better and more scientific understanding of the African natives and the problem they create." There is "a current assumption" among the whites that the native should have as little leisure as possible.

He notes the 2½ million coffee trees in native cultivation on Kilimanjaro, the eight thousand coffee-planting Africans there as compared with the two hundred white planters, and he has something withering to say about the unceasing campaign of the planters in Kenya to have the growing of this lucrative crop by Africans prohibited by Government. He comments on the fashion in Kenya of disparaging the capacity of the African, the "great fun" of speculating in land values, the ramshackle labourers' quarters on the estates of unprogressive settlers, "the atmosphere rather than anything tangible" under which an ultimate cause of friction between Government and one important tribe "seems to be the presence of white settlers". He recognises that it is the severity of Government taxation that "enforces periodical migrations upon almost all able-bodied males" to leave their villages for the service of white employers, and his conclusion is that "one hopes that as time goes on, more and more of them will be able to remain at home and build up a real peasant civilization of their own."

Meanwhile, his interest is largely focussed on the schools of the land, among which he finds much to praise and a few lapses of which he disapproves. He believes that the pick of the Africans, given a good education for a generation or two, will "reach a very high standard". He stresses the need for educating the common people, partly that they may make their voices heard in their local affairs and also be a check upon chiefs and headmen as they were in the old days when these latter had not yet been given the status of salaried Government servants. He devotes a chapter to a regrettable case of confused thinking and misguided political adventure by the white personnel of a Protestant mission.

A happier theme is found in the activities of the Kenya Government's Deputy Director of Sanitary Services to which he gives unstinted praise, while mis-spelling that official's name! There is a rhapsody on the exploit of building 9,000 latrines in the territory of one small tribe and treating 49,000 of its people, by way of reducing the incidence of hook-worm disease. There is one unnecessary passage

of some asperity on the Indian population of the Colony, but elsewhere he records, as "a depressing fact", that boys from the Indian school at Nairobi are passing examinations which have not yet been attempted by children from the European school.

Nothing has yet been said of Professor Huxley's constant habit of "nature-study" as he moves about in new ground. It provides one of the particular charms of the book. His little chapter on "The Real Africa" is a delight. That on "Wild-Life Sanctuaries" is an inspiration; that on "Some African Animals" is a refreshment—in its dissimilarity from the banalities of the average sportsman's tale of slaughter and "nose-to-tail" measurements.

The outstanding features of this gay narrative are exuberance and discernment. At the present juncture, with questions of British policy in East Africa under detailed consideration by a joint committee of both Houses of Parliament, the book is topical to a degree, and East Africa will be fortunate in so far as its message commands a wide audience.

W. MCGREGOR ROSS

## *Portrait of a Man*

OBLOMOV. *By Ivan Goncharov.* Translated by Natalie A. Duddington (Allen & Unwin) 10*s.* 6*d.*

WHEN I had finished reading this novel, I kept inquiring of my friends, "Have you read Oblomov?" "Oblomov?" "A fresh translation of Goncharov's classic." "Goncharov? What, another Russian?" "And a master. Or a minor master at least. And his story is at least a minor masterpiece."

Whereupon, I would be suffered to state my conviction that when the story was first published in the original—in 1858—at least one new name was added to the roll of immortal characters in fiction. Oblomov. Ilya Ilyitch Oblomov. I can well believe Mr. Maurice Baring's statement that Oblomov embodies an attitude of mind so prevalent in Russia that it has already become an ism—Oblomovism—a philosophy of inaction.

And this master of inaction—indicate his character schematically and most men, according to their charity or lack of it, should pity or despise him. What did he do? Nothing. What did he try to do? Nothing. Well, then, what a worthless fellow. Who'd be bothered with him? Th

socially hyper-sensitive might even call him scoundrel. But read the book. Let Goncharov have his way with you; attend quietly, while imaginative insight begins to paint the portrait of this seeming wastrel. Your estimate of his character will undergo a subtle and continuous change. From the first sure strokes you will be finding titles for the portrait, and revising them. Parasite. That will seem adequate at first. Portrait of a parasite—the last refinement of Russian feudalism. But it won't do for long. A little later, you will try, perhaps: Portrait of an amiable man, phenomenally lazy, but how cultured! how sensitive! how simple and human and deeply kind! And so on through one modification and another, till you arrive simply and finally at this: Portrait of a man. And thereafter there is for you no more unwisdom of indignant prejudgment, of facile pityings or despisings. For the charity of great art has been suffered to expound and illumine the truth about a human soul. You know the man, now. You do really know him, and that he is what he is and could not without violation be otherwise. And you love him, because through understanding him and his frailty you have been led to understand a little what underlies all our strengths and frailties—the mystery and beauty of human life.

It is the miracle of great literature. To say less about this story would be a timid understatement of my own response to it. Yet to leave it at that would be likewise misleading. Parts of the writing are dead. While Goncharov's imagination is at play upon Oblomov, the illumination is steady and miraculously revealing. But there are minor characters, and, with one or two exceptions, Goncharov's sympathy has not been deeply enough engaged to give them authentic life. Perfunctory sketches, merely. Though in other company they might pass for competent portraits, beside the superb delineation of Oblomov their inadequacy is manifest.

Structurally, too, the story has faults. Long reminiscences back to gran'papa as case-history have value, but check the carry-forward of the narrative a little unduly; and there are long meditative passages which, though grave and wise concerning the problems they discuss, in this context count as prolix embroiderings upon the rather loose texture of the theme and plot.

And the plot? Oblomov refuses to get out of bed, to leave his quiet room, to be a man of action. He allows himself to be bullied, robbed, lectured, pampered, commiserated and loyally beloved. The influence

of his friend Stolz—a contrasting ready-made complete man of action—persuades him to make the mistake of emerging into society and almost marrying a bright young lady of his own class. Oblomov's fate and instinct are too powerful, however; he drops back into inertia, marries his illiterate housekeeper and bestirs himself for life's vain shows no more until he dies.

The housekeeper, Agafya Matyevena, is the one character in the book beside Oblomov, whose portrayal could not have been done by less than genius. In her inarticulate love and loyalty she is kin to Marty South. But a greater than Marty by far. And for appreciation I will say no more than that. J. W. COULTER

## *Family Unhappiness*

MR. LINE. *By L. A. Pavey* (Peter Davies) 7*s*. 6*d*.
CHARLOTTE'S ROW. *By H. E. Bates* (Cape) 7*s*. 6*d*.

MR. LINE firmly announces itself as a novel; but this is misleading. True, Mr. Line has a wife who bores him by the limitation of her interests to the concrete—as far as one can judge a mere sketch—and three children for whom he feels intermittent affection; a neighbour called Hunt who is amusingly described, and colleagues at his office; but there is not only no action, there is no development and no apparent scheme. The chapters might just as well be read in the reverse, or any, order. They comprise the reflections, vaguely philosophical, and reminiscences of a civil servant who is very conscious of living in a suburb. Where the reminiscences concern his time as a soldier in France his style deteriorates and—perhaps because there has been an anticipatory quickening of interest—there comes that sense of cheated disappointment which an access of self-consciousness in a sincere writer produces; on page 89, for instance, Mr. Pavey descends to insipid clichés. But that he has an interesting mind is proved by such a formless book being so readable; and the quality of mind may best be judged by reading short passages, such as the end of the chapter called London Sport, the whole of "Newspapers," and the description of Essex on pages 173-174. Such a mind applied to and constrained by a scheme is likely to produce an interesting novel; but the perverse Mr. Pavey will probably label it "Essays."

Mr. Bates presents more of a problem. Here is a very young writer,

whose short stories are so admirable that one approaches his novel with lively expectation. He has a very lucid, direct style; he can arouse sympathy with his persons; he never labours a situation or a point; his descriptions of landscape are enchanting. His theme is life in a slum whose squalor is only relieved by the æsthetic feelings and aspirations possessed by all the chief characters. Masher, the ineffectual Socialist, adores flowers and trees and books; Pauline, whom he loves, longs passionately to escape from the filth, debt and bickering of her home to something not only materially better; for the boy Adam, legends of his dead mother's beauty symbolise all that he lacks; even Pauline's father, the drunkard, braggart shoemaker, goes poaching mainly because his idea of bliss is to get right away into the country. Mr. Bates does not overtly pile on the squalor or the spiritual beauty flowering from the mould. Nor is subtlety wanting: the seed of discord and despair in Masher's relations with Pauline is delicately suggested by his innocent deception on their first country walk, and in their halting conversation on the second. Whence, then, a lurking discomfort—the sort of discomfort associated with sentimentality?

It is significant that the little boy Adam is early in the book endowed with a falsely picturesque and adult point of view:

> "To him they (the lodgers) seemed a simple, timid pair, bound up in each other, and desperately fond of the thin white child."

Adam throughout remains a rather Christmas-card figure; and Pauline, though wretchedly poor, contrives to wear "a thin flowered dress" or a "thin white summer dress" whenever the emotions of the scene require it. These are details, yet perhaps they point to what is wrong with this very striking book. Isn't Mr. Bates too much concerned with beauty and with making us love his characters? Doesn't he love them too much himself, *as part of himself*? There are two ways of loving, one productive of art, one inimical. To become the sparrow, as Keats did, is one way of loving; but to love the sparrow because it is an exteriorised part of oneself produces sentimentality. I think it is this disguised form of narcissism, very common in life and art, which mars *Charlotte's Row*. The business of a writer is to apprehend and to become his material, while maintaining complete detachment; this apparent paradox is synonymous with the productive kind of love. In other words, the writer must look after his own individual truth, and he will find that beauty looks after itself.

E. B. C. JONES

# *What Can Be Done*

ENGLAND ARISE. *By Godfrey Elton* (Cape) 10*s.* 6*d.*

ARISTOCRACY. *By Philippe Mairet* (Daniel) 5*s.*

SOCIALISM is a term which has figured so frequently in debate that many now are sick of it. Old men have talked it; it has been staled in the dialect of our elders; and like all theories which have been trafficked between the generations, it suffers through having been so often put to illegitimate uses, made powder and shot of for domestic purposes in the petty antagonisms of youth and age. It is as tiresome as the people who have talked it. Besides, the time has long since gone by when each new book on Socialism was a valuable addition to the propagandist's library and might be expected to open another battery on the entrenchments of Capitalist apologists. Capitalism has few apologists now who are likely to read books, and none who will answer them. So now indeed we are inclined to look askance at new bottles for a wine so old and of such a well-known taste. Most of the readers of *The Adelphi*, I imagine, have made up their minds about Socialism. According to temperament, we want either to talk it ourselves or to hear no more about it. From this comfortable apathy it needs a Tawney to arouse us.

But this is a before-taking description. It represents the various tremors of distaste with which I took up *England Arise* and discovered its theme. Well, I was wrong. Socialism can still make an inspiring book. Its theories, which were so fascinating fifty years ago, look thin now because they have been absorbed into men's lives; they have outgrown their bookish origin—one might say, their blue-bookish origin—lived in simple terms and become the inspiration of deeds and conflicts. Through hearing Socialism expounded in a tumble of text-book locutions or in association with the customary driftwood of political irrelevancies, we forget how living it really is, and that in the dark forest of men's deeper minds it is everywhere a fire and a faith.

*England Arise* is a reminder. Mr. Elton writes the history of this theory which became a faith. It is a good story and a true one, fortunately. It is lucky for us when good stories are also true, because it confirms a belief we cherish that all good stories may be made true, if we will that it be so.

The history covers a period of twenty years, the last twenty years

of the nineteenth century. It begins dramatically with a certain visit Hyndman paid Disraeli for the purpose of enlisting that statesman's sympathies in the cause of his newly-discovered faith. Disraeli could not help; he could only advise Hyndman to get on with the job himself. Hyndman took that advice, and the result was the Social Democratic Federation, which a newspaper later described contemptuously and accurately as "Hyndman and his friends". It was true, but then those friends were William Morris, John Burns, Andreas Scheu, Edward Carpenter, each of them such a host in himself that the same newspaper was presently expressing alarm at the spread of Socialism consequent upon the dangerous activities of the Federation, though that body still consisted merely of Hyndman and his friends.

This makes a remarkably fine story which stimulates many useful trains of thought and arouses the imagination. One thing chiefly which emerges is especially interesting to *Adelphi* readers. A dozen idealists having nothing but the truth in the hearts and the courage of having absolutely nothing to be ashamed of can prevail against every powerful and selfish force. And it matters little to them, though much to their country whether they prevail or not. This is the S.D.F. in action:

> "At the chosen spot they formed an expectant and somewhat self-conscious group around the speaker, whose air of well-being and good education did a little but not much to increase their confidence . . . Standing on the cobble-stones, 'in a quiet voice which presently rose to a shout' the speaker began forthwith to repeat over and over again, 'Friends, we are the Bristol Branch of the Social Democratic Federation, and we are going to hold a meeting. We shall tell you of our message to the workers of the world, what it means to you, and how it will relieve you of your poverty.' Gradually, a knot of inquisitive passers-by collected, but few stayed to listen for more than a minute or two, and not one showed any signs of interest. So this was the open-air meeting! At the end, the most optimistic could not deny that it had been a small one. More spectators would have stopped to watch a dog-fight, and would have stayed longer. The little group separated thoughtfully, amid stares."

Could anything be more futile? Yet it was not futile because these men really had something to say, something which they had no reason on earth for saying except that it was true and they believed it. And

since they had this, call no man poor or powerless who has the truth in his heart and a tongue in his head: no more is needed; the dice are weighted in his favour.

This history indicates what can be done against opposition from without; there is still to be considered the subtler and more easily neglected opposition from within. Granted that you have got rid of the tyranny of wealth, what then? Victorian social reformers, persuaded quite beyond question of the absolute rightness of democracy, had only to make the democracy complete by abolishing the privileges of the monied, and all else followed. Their descendants are not so optimistic. Democracy has thinned, diluted by the extraordinary hosts of voters which it must now embrace; and there has arisen besides, a bogy called Psychology by which every theory must be measured. Hence, Mr. Mairet calls his examination into the architecture of societies, *Aristocracy*, an unsatisfactory term because of its associations and therefore modified as Axiocracy to denote "a society in which the better a man is, the more power he has." Under this heading, he discusses the need of recognising the social functions of the groups composing society and makes many observations which are shrewd and stimulating. But though it is true that a secure society cannot be founded on just laws of general application alone, but must make allowance somewhere in its constitution for the particular needs of groups of varying function, many of Mr. Mairet's conclusions are of the tentative sort which are bound to recur more completely worked out in a later book. This one is good enough to suggest that the next will be better.

J. COMMON

# *Shorter Notices*

HITLER. *By Wyndham Lewis* (Chatto & Windus) *6s.*

The Hitlerist, or *Nazi*, Movement is a movement of post-war German Youth; is founded on a belief (rather vague) in Race, with a consequent anti-Semite tendency; holds that Finance and Marxian Socialism are but two aspects of one universal modern evil; appeals to the small property-owner and the peasant; is virile, ascetic, realistic, serious. So much, if you did not know it before, you will learn from Mr. Wyndham Lewis' new book. So much, but little more. Mr. Lewis represents himself to be detachedly sympathetic towards Hitler, whom

he offers to us alternatively as a symbol of the regenerated German Man or as a comparatively insignificant political puppet thrown into prominence by the post-war situation. Take a chance on it, Mr. Lewis seems to say, there *may* be in this movement something of value for the whole of Europe.

But he is almost comically anxious not to commit himself—especially when he broaches the ticklish question of Finance. Hitler's views, it appears, are very similar to those of the English Credit-Reformers, or "Credit-cranks" as Mr. Lewis calls them. As the "world's languidest" economist he naturally knows nothing about credit reform; "What I know about Finance is not worth knowing," he says, and, ten lines further on the page, "I tell you what I know, for what it is worth". True to his word, he tells us nothing; but he keeps it snappy, and when we reach the end of the book we have to admit that although we have learnt little, we have been treated to a racy account of what is undoubtedly an important contemporary political phenomenon.

The trouble is that we feel we have a right to expect from Mr. Lewis something more solid than a descriptive sketch—even though it be illustrated with excellent photographs and enlivened with echoes from his old familiar themes of the child-cult the "exotic" neurosis, the class-war, the sex-war, the dark laughter complex, and all the rest of it.

EACH STANDS ALONE. *By Arthur Wellings* (Dent) *7s. 6d.*

An honest, workmanlike account of a prolonged but uneventful love-affair between a young bank clerk-writer and a woman, a fellow-worker, eight years his senior. Its main interest lies in its unvaried presentation of incident through its characters' "streams of consciousness", but it illustrates the limitations rather than the possibilities of the method, and its purely mechanical device of parallel columns effectively destroys any suggestion of reality. Mr. Wellings has declared elsewhere that the "stream of consciousness method" enables the writer to "get nearer the truth" and so he "finds it easier to create beauty, which, as Keats tells us, *is* truth". This is only bettered by the publisher's reassurance that this book can be read and appreciated "by any person of average intelligence." O thank you, sir!

*Printed by the Shenval Press, 58 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1, and published for the proprietors at 58 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1. Advertising Manager, S. R. Le Mare, 23 Paternoster Square, E.C.4. Telephone: City 9107. Registered for transmission by Canadian Registered Post.*

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# THE ADELPHI

VOL. 2, NO. 3, JUNE 1931

BERTRAM BROOKER

## *Prophets Wanted*

"IT is the heaviest stone that Melancholy can throw at a man," wrote Sir Thomas Browne, "to tell him he is at the end of his nature; or that there is no further state to come, into which this seems progressionall."

Such a statement might almost be taken as a contemporary diagnosis of the temper of the present day. Modern scepticism, with a Canute-like gesture, says to mankind—"Thus far, and no farther." Modern pessimists are feverishly scribbling "Finis" all over the latest page of history; while the "new" Humanists, with more practical minds, are engaged in building a palatial terminus (after Greek models) in which civilisation may conveniently come to a full stop.

The "new" Humanists have marked out a definite and restricted sphere for man, cut off on the one side from the natural world, and on the other, from the supernatural. They would set limits to his nature, believing that man cannot improve himself progressively, but only repressively. The best he can do is to discipline himself, and thus, by curbing his passions, his desires, his hopes, and his imagination, he may make the three-score-years' journey with a minimum of discomfort.

Although bolstered up with erudite references to the philosophers and poets of the past, the "law of measure," so ambiguously propounded by present-day Humanists, turns out to be nothing more than the simple doctrine of compromise, which

is conveyed to every schoolboy in terms of a "happy medium."

It is mistaken for a contribution of considerable importance to modern thought because it has never before been propounded so diligently and on so grand a scale by persons who have the courage of very timid convictions.

Pertinacity of exposition—in an age accustomed to advertising —easily obscures, it seems, the essential faintheartedness of this "new" gospel, which seeks to combat the negativeness of a sceptical and pessimistic age by more far-reaching denials than those that have brought us to the present pass.

A group of denial-mongers leading humanity out of the wilderness of denialism is perhaps the most pathetic symptom of our contemporary disease.

Western man is afflicted with the accumulated results of spiritual malnutrition. It is our lacks, and not our excesses, that have made us an invalid generation. The spiritual and moral emptiness that rumbles vacantly in most attempts at expression to-day is brought about by four principal lacks:

—lack of authority.
—lack of centrality.
—lack of standards.
—lack of dignity.

Such excesses as we have managed to perpetrate in recent years can be traced to the complete disbelief in the effectiveness of any imposed autocratic order, whether of gods or men. Any autocracy—anything "strong-in-itself"—has aroused our suspicions, our scepticism and our impatience. Those things only are certain, those things only are good, that can be evolved individually and demonstrated as reasonable to a pragmatical intelligence. In a word, all forms of *outer* compulsion are galling to the modern mind.

This would not be so bad if a compensating trust in some inner compulsion—other than the promptings of the mite-like, contemporary, individual self and its "ishness"—were present to

supersede our former reliance on outer authority. But the most conspicuous of our lacks, and easily the most damaging, is the loss of centrality. All our other impoverishments are derivable from this.

It is natural that we should have seen the absurdity of thinking that the inner could be controlled by the outer; but it is unnatural —unorganic, indeed, and we are nothing if not organisms—to ignore and even deny the prime power of inwardness to affect outwardness in every manifestation of life.

The essential inward oneness of the whole phenomenal world, which is sensed as a part of the commonplace experience of the humblest and least-endowed child, while at the same time forming the core of all transcendental philosophies and religions, is brushed aside as a metaphysical abstraction produced by the "pattern" of the mind. In its stead we enthrone a behavioristic rationalization of experience that is at once sterile and superstitious —superstitious, that is to say, in accepting the dead letter of mechanistic explanation for the living mystery of phenomenal action and interaction.

We live, as Henry Adams perceived, in a "multiverse", having lost all sense of a universe and the centrality which the conception of "turning-into-one" implies.

Discarding, as we do, the outer impositions of dogma and the inner compulsions of spirit, it is not surprising that we lack standards. And it is not surprising, either, that the "new" Humanists, who talk incessantly of standards deducible from an application of the "law of measure", are utterly unable to discover any.

Their catchwords—"moderation", "decorum", and so on— are actually negations of standards, whether considered as *measurements* (in which case they amount to marking a spot halfway between two necessary evils), or whether considered as *banners* to which bewildered humanity can rally.

In neither case do they *stand*— as standards obvi[illegible] [illegible]hould—rooted in the real; but are simply signposts erect[illegible] [illegible]straction, pointing nowhere, but rather [illegible]ng the way [illegible]r not to stir from a safe and selfish middle g[illegible]

Possessing no allegiances; adr[illegible] a dead se[illegible] "conditionings" and "complexes" and relativ[illegible] "events"; l[illegible]ng standards that refer either to the real or to the ideal, the natu[illegible]r the supernatural; it is only logical that this new brain-blow[illegible] Homunculus —modern western man—should lack dignity; for, [illegible]ke Goethe's bottled pigmy, he is fragile, coddles himself again[illegible] the gusts of experience, and does everything "m[illegible]estly, lest t[illegible] the glass I shatter".

What we know of human dignity, [illegible]andeur, an[illegible] "sense of glory", has not sprung from the cold recluse, but fr[illegible] men who felt at once their kinship with the animals an[illegible] an[illegible]ls, "ready to be anything, in the ecstacy of being ever".

It appears to be believed that dignity can be regained, together with lost authority and forgotten centrality, by a laboriously evolved dialectic that will hedge men about with prejudices and predilections—a system of "liking and disliking the right things."

It should be obvious—although seemingly it is not—that such an aim abandons the quest of centrality and concerns itself wholly with the circumference of experience.

Not the least tragic of the many confusions of thought into which the "new" Humanists have fallen, in their attempt to straddle all possible fences, is this inability to "measure" their own fundamental position. They imagine themselves as being close to a spiritual centre (Mr. Babbitt, particularly, thanking his stars that he is not "spiritually indolent", as other men are), whereas anyone possessing the faintest gleam of what Coventry Patmore called "unitive apprehension" can see distinctly the frigid pole where they really stand, at the furthest possible remove from any conceivable "core" of life.

Mr. Babbitt actually conceives the "universal centre" as a sort of pole that can be stuck up wherever one chooses, after the manner of Moses' rod, as an efficacious means of warding off the modern pestilence.

"Practically," he says, "the assertion of a universal centre means the setting up of some pattern or model for imitation. . . Humanism, however, differs from religion in putting at the basis of the pattern it sets up, not man's divinity, but the something in his nature that sets him apart simply as man from other animals and that Cicero defines as a 'sense of order and decorum and measure in deeds and words' . . . it (Humanism) holds that the world would have been a better place if more persons had made sure that they were human before setting out to be superhuman."

This, of course, is the worst possible example of putting the human cart before the universal horse, a practice which characterizes all "new" Humanistic thought. These Humanists talk grandly of a "universal centre", of "energy of soul", of "higher will" and of "higher immediacy"; yet they are concerned only with *controlling* the manifestations of a higher-universal-central-will-energy as it appears in man.

That they have merely derived their notions of centrality and soul-energy from ancient philosophers, and have never *experienced* the "higher immediacy" of which they prate, is obvious from their persistent suggestions that it should be and can be controlled. It seems superfluous to point out that if "higher" means anything in the vocabulary of these "measurers", it must mean *higher than lower*, and, if so, a higher will must control a lower will, and not the other way round.

The curious "belief" of the modern Humanists in this higher will is worth studying. Babbitt says "the higher will must simply be accepted as a mystery that may be studied in its practical effects, but that, in its ultimate nature, is incapable of formulation." He goes on to say that "the person who declines to turn

the higher will to account until he is sure he has grasped its ultimate nature is very much on a level with the man who should refuse to make practical use of electrical energy until he is certain he has an impeccable theory of electricity."

These two quotations betray the reactionary character of Humanistic thought at its innermost centre. Here is an admission that no attempt should be made to "study" the higher will in its ultimate nature. All we should do is to switch it on and off like electricity. It is something that fortunately exists merely to be "turned to account."

If this is not a mechanistic notion, I should like to be shown one. But it is not merely mechanistic. It is an attitude which says, in effect: Great men in the past have studied or apprehended something of the ultimate nature of the higher will—just as physicists and mechanicians have learned something of the nature of electricity—but we shall not attempt to carry on their work any further; we shall simply press the buttons—adopt the "values" or "standards"—which they have made available for us.

Humanism, in other words, is a species of spiritual cowardice. Although fully appreciating that the "wisdom of the ages" was wrested from reality by men who had the courage and energy to grapple with the higher will—as Jacob did with the angel—refusing to give up the struggle until some glimpse of the ultimate secret had been revealed to them, Humanism is content to accept the rewards of their wrestling and turn them to account in a passive and repressive pattern of conduct that is favourable to comfort.

"The real humanist consents," says Babbitt, "like Aristotle, to limit his desires only in so far as this limitation can be shown to make for his own happiness." And in another place: "The humanist does not carry the exercise of this will beyond a subduing of his desires to the law of measure; but it may be carried much further until it amounts to a turning away from the desires of the natural man altogether—the 'dying to the world' of the Christian".

There is no lack of admission in "new" Humanist writings, if you search for it, that there have been men who have pressed further than they—the Humanists—intend to go. Babbitt confesses that "religion is in its purity the very height of man", and quotes, as an example of its purest and most "authentic" utterance, the words of Thomas à Kempis: "Know for certain that thou must lead a dying life; and the more a man dies to himself the more he begins to live in God."

A "new" Humanist can quote this appreciately, because he has determined to ignore its positive side and accept only the negative side, which fits in with his preconceived repressive pattern of conduct. He is not willing to "die to himself", or to "die into life", as Keats describes the process in *Hyperion*. He denies or ignores or explains away or declares "incapable of formulation" the God or the "life" which Keats and à Kempis postulate as the state in which a man lives when he has died to himself.

The "new" Humanist, in short, clings to the negative while denying the positive of which it is merely the obverse. He accepts the circumference while disregarding the centrality which holds it in position.

These quibblers must be opposed. Their wobbling dialectic, bolstered with quotations from writers whose mental and spiritual implications they either ignore or misrepresent (by selecting for emphasis only the negative aspects of their thought), must be resisted by poets and prophets who are capable of emphasizing the positive pole of reality.

It is the poet-prophet type alone who can re-create sublimity for us by recovering the sense of centrality that modern life has obscured. It is precisely because we have been concerned with "practical effects" and with "turning to account" the higher will, instead of "dying" into it, that we have lost the faculty of apprehending a "universal centre", whose immediacy, experienced in our lives, would create the values that we miss.

Only the poet, detached from practicality, can regain this experience and communicate it to a sceptical world. The difference, as Aristotle pointed out, between the historian or realistic writer, and the poet, is "that one tells what happened and the other *what might happen*".

The poet is able to reveal universal truths, instead of mere "particulars of sense", because, as one commentator observes, he can "create new happenings in the texture of which the pattern of life is plainer than in any 'particular' experience".

Instead of rationalizing from particulars on the circumference of life, he creates from a centrality—an inner apprehension of universal relationships converging in an ultimate unity. The poet, in short, puts the universal horse ahead of the human cart.

Emerson—himself something of the "whole man, the reconciler, the poet-priest" whose advent he eagerly awaited—was quite clear as to the circumferential character of facts and the centrality of spirit.

"There seems to be a necessity in spirit", he says, "to manifest itself in material forms; and day and night, river and storm, beast and bird, acid and alkali, pre-exist in necessary Ideas in the mind of God, and are what they are by virtue of preceding affections in the world of spirit. *A fact is the end or last issue of spirit.*"

Prophets are wanted to-day to re-assert and demonstrate this priority of spirit, showing us, as Herbert Read deduces from earlier poets, that "the true life" is lived "only by those who see beyond the futility of what is, to the glory of what might be."

This emphasis, from Aristotle to Read, on the sublimity of what might happen as compared with the tawdriness of what does happen—a doctrine which postulates spirit as a perfection existing eternally *ahead* of man, in the future as in the past—is exactly the doctrine that is necessary to-day to combat both the comfort-seeking Humanists and the prosperity-seeking mechanistic *humanitarians.*

To mechanize man into physical comfort and to repress him into mental comfort will not satisfy the essential craving of the human spirit, which is for spiritual comfort. Men are not *persuaded* into spiritual comfort. They cannot be mechanized or dogmatized or "Humanized" in that direction. "An accepted certainty", as Middleton Murry says, "is not a certainty . . . man cannot accept certainties; he must *discover* them."

It is not persuaders that we need, but poets and prophets of our own time who will rediscover the sublimity of the possible as an antidote to the triviality of the actual.

And we want not merely poets and prophets who will transport us with the wonder of what might be; we want also critics who will view literature as the poet views nature, critics who will hold up, as Poe suggested, not merely the good, nor even the best that has been achieved, but the best that *can be* achieved.

Both poets and critics must be *ahead of attainment.* The new wonder, which recurs constantly in human history, arises when men realize, after a period of depression, that man has not reached the end of his nature, and that there are, indeed, no *ends.*

The human race is always changing, and its values with it—and perfection is perhaps reconstituted each moment as the sum total of constantly evolving relationships—so that the race may not be perfectible in the old sense, but it can *go on,* continually creating new and possibly grander consummations than have been attained in the past. These consummations may not find expression through single individuals or in single works of art. They may conceivably be attained by and for the race as a whole. And above all, they need not be—indeed, cannot be—*end* consummations.

"Instead of a will to this or that posited and ideal end", says Middleton Murry, "there is a will to pure self-emergence. We learn to wait upon the unknown that we are; we are dedicated to *whatever of creative newness may emerge through us.*"

There are a few writers, and Murry is among them, with a thinker as unlike as Whitehead touching shoulders with him, who, in unpoetic fashion, are prophesying the coming gospel of creative newness. We need poets who will be at once less involved and more stimulating than the metaphysicians, to create wonder for this new conception—the idea of a spiritual centrality continually emerging in new consummations toward the circumference that is rounded and temporarily ended in the consciousness of each individual man.

Those who admit the existence of some sort of universal centrality, but have made up their minds not to seek it or understand it or dedicate themselves to it, are among the first and harshest of the critics of such a conception. They dub it pantheistic and "indefinite". Yet when the religionist asks them to "die" into it, to see whether or not it *is* indefinite, they say: We admit that religion is the height of man, but we are content with the lowlands.

Or when a "philosopher of flux", as they call Whitehead, attempts to make the conception more definite by scientific rationalization, they will have none of him either.

Their own kind of indefiniteness concerning the higher will, with its "incapacity of formulation", suits them perfectly, for it makes no calls on them. And their own kind of definiteness, which limits man's conduct and destiny to a tiny circle of prescribed "human" activity, suits them perfectly, also, for it comfortably shuts out the necessity of "dying into life"—the turbulent, new, creative, emergent life of the spirit.

In England, Wyndham Lewis is much more candid in his objection to the "organic" philosophy of creative newness. "By this proposed transfer", he says, "from the beautiful objective, material world of common sense, over to the organic world of chronological mentalism, you lose not only the clearness of outline, the static beauty, of the things you commonly apprehend;

you lose also the clearness of outline of your own individuality which apprehends them."

This, of course, has always been the objection to "high religion", as Mr. Lippmann calls the earlier and more emotional manifestations of the doctrine of creative newness. The individual is determined not to die into life—determined not to lose his soul to save it—determined not to be "born again".

Wyndham Lewis and the "new" Humanists, and many another crier in the wilderness of pessimism, all bewailing what men have lost, are yet afraid of losing something more. They cling to the hard outline and the comfortable concreteness of their world. They are cloistered and unadventurous, despite all their criticism of other philosophies as an "evasion of life".

The man who wants rules and standards in a measurable and clear-cut universe is himself the person who is trying to escape from life, in which, as Middleton Murry declares, crisis is continual.

These reactionaries are aware that if mankind comes to regard life as emerging constantly from a spiritual centrality, the race will soon be utterly changed. And they dislike the discomfort of change. They dread the new coming of poets and prophets who will dream of what might be, and will urge humanity, in le Galliene's phrase, "to stretch the octave between dream and deed."

Like Joseph's brethren they point the finger of scorn and cry: Behold, this dreamer cometh.

But they cannot, with all their stubborn Canuteness, hold back the tide of eternal novelty.

Far from being at the end of his nature, man is at this moment emerging into a new consciousness of universality and unity. He is taking the first blundering steps toward a new conception of the old dogma-disguised truths at the core of life.

High above littered controversy and heaped polemics there can still be seen, except by these blinded ones who lead the blind, the "prophetic soul of the wide world, dreaming on things to come."

ARTHUR INGLEBY

# *A Passing Phase*

THE TRAIN slid quietly on, while the two men talked philosophy. The abstract phrases thinned and vanished like puffs of steam. "The empirical self . . . the universal mind. . ." Barry, the younger, felt impatient. What did it all *mean*?

A man lurched through the carriage doorway, fumbled for a basket in the corner, and lapsed heavily upon the seat opposite. Drunk. But Barry was glad of the interruption. It fitted his dissatisfaction with the phrases of a vague idealism; gave point to his impatience.

Barry re-gathered his wits. "It seems to me", he said carefully, "that the universal mind doesn't mean very much. Possibly it's a logical ground—but a logical ground isn't a *reality*."

"It's nice to think about", said David, the elder, with a quizzical smile. Something about his pursed mouth and his narrowed eyes suggested that it was perched on the end of his nose, and that he was contemplating it there.

Barry laughed. But he was not going to let old David escape so lightly. He pounded on.

"I can understand the universal mind when it is used to expound a real experience. When the mystics and the poets describe their rapture, I can share it; and I can be content with their name for what they were rapt into. But this universal mind of logic . . . "

He paused abruptly. The drunken man opposite was leaning heavily forward, watching him intently; he appeared to be hanging on his words. What nonsense! Impossible! Barry stared at his shoes, disconcerted. After all, it was horribly indecent to be talking metaphysics in a railway carriage, at any rate in a voice above a whisper. But that at least was not his fault. David was hard of hearing. He pulled himself together.

"This universal mind of logic", he went on with an effort of concentration, "is just a misleading metaphor. It might as well be universal matter. It only *seems* to be something rarer, more comforting, more spiritual. That is, if it corresponds to a reality at all. I don't believe it does. It's merely a logical hypothesis of intellectual experience—and most experience isn't intellectual, only intellectualized. . . ."

Again he felt the intent eyes of the drunken man upon him. For heaven's sake let them change the subject! He became silent.

Then, avoiding his face, he stared at the drunk man's hands, clasped tightly on his knees. They were covered with coarse blue tattoo; but what filled his eyes was a slice of raw flesh on the back of the man's thumb—an inch of strange pink under-flesh with a flap of dirty top-skin at the side. Why did it not bleed? Perhaps it was not as bad as it looked.

With a grimy thumb the man smoothed back the flap of skin. Barry's stomach winced. Those hands were terrible! They had had to endure too much. Their broken nails, their blue tattoo, two gouts of dark dried blood on the thick vein at the back—hands were not made for that. The universal mind had forgotten about those hands.

Then, as though out of the hands came a voice that Barry felt he had been waiting for—a voice that redeemed and made wonderful those hands: a drink-thickened voice, but soft and sweet and troubling.

"What do you think of it?" said the voice.

Barry looked up quickly. Quiet grey eyes with patient puckered lids looked into his.

"What did you say?" said Barry.

"What do you think of it?" said the soft voice.

"Think of what?"

"Life," said the voice.

Barry's soul went still with astonishment. Time stopped for a

moment. And for that moment Barry could not speak. But the eyes were on him. Say something he must.

"What do *you* think of it?" he said.

"It's only a passing phase," said the voice. And again Barry's soul went still; and again with an effort, he spoke.

"How do you know?"

"I know." The man paused. "Instinct. . . . I've been out six months and a half," the voice went on. "Manchester to the Persian Gulf—Colombo . . . Rangoon . . . Trinidad." He tapped his raw pink flesh and Barry winced again. "That little b—— did that." He nodded smiling to the basket. "I got him in Trinidad." He raised the brown paper gently and Barry glimpsed the lovely green of a young parrot. "From Trinidad through the Panama Canal up to Vancouver; back again through the Canal. It's only a passing phase."

"Passing to what?"

He shook his head. "Money, all that—it don't matter. It's got" —he hiccuped softly—"no importance."

He knew, evidently, and knowing, he could not explain. There it was. But he had more to say. Was it irrelevant?

"The skipper—he was a gen'leman. Cornishman. Cap'n Kemp. He was—" he paused gravely; but nothing better came—"a gen'leman. You know what I mean. The mate was no bloody good; but the skipper he was a gen'leman. I got malaria in the Persian Gulf—and when I was bad, the skipper came along with a bottle. He *knew* I was bad. He was a gen'leman. Yet, y' know," he added, "he's only got a ticket for steam. I've got a mate's ticket for a square-rigged ship. He used to laugh at me about it. He wondered how I got a mate's ticket—'ssamination, too. It wants getting. Twenty-seven years I've been at sea: fifteen in a wind-jammer. It's a bloody life.

"Them young lads they send to sea. Come out of nice homes, they do—got everything they want. It makes your belly sick to

watch 'em. It's cruel. And all they get is a nice little uniform to go on shore with. Don't you send your boy to sea. There was one called Hawkins—Devonshire boy. Came out of Devonport. A nice lad. Father in the Dockyard. Only had to write home and everything of the best was got for him. I was *sorry* for that lad. I took him under my wing." He lifted his arm and gently patted the place where young Hawkins was made snug. "Taught him all I knew—'bout *everything*."

Barry glanced at the grey eyes: they did not flicker. *Everything* was a large word in a sailor's mouth.

"'Bout *everything*," the voice repeated. "He came to me one night when I was at the wheel, and he said: 'I'm sick of it. When I go ashore, at Colombo, I ain't coming back again.' 'Twas the mate been at him again. The mate weren't no good at all. He only had his ticket in steam; and I wouldn't have given him that. He was a bloody awful s——."

"'Tweren't no use to *talk* to a boy like that. He would 'a cried, or done something silly. I couldn't see his face. So I said to him: 'I'll tell you something. I'll tell you something nobody on this bloody ship knows 'cep me. D'you like to know?' "

" 'Yes,' he says.

" 'Then go and get me an end o' wire rope.'

"He went off and got it. And I showed him—all through my trick at the wheel I showed him—splices nobody knew on that ship 'cep me. I was a rigger first. I know everything. I showed him all I knew every night—everything. He forgot about his troubles: and he'll be a skipper one day. But don't you send your boy to sea.

"Been right round the world this trip, I have. More than that. What's the distance round the world? Twenty-five thousand miles?"

Barry calculated. "That's about it."

"I've done it and half as much again, this trip. Ro-mance. And

when I get home, and I've had two days in bed, what shall I do?"

Barry knew the answer to this, but did not give it.

"Look for another bloody ship."

The sailor put his hand into his basket, and stroked the bright blue bird. After a moment, "He's bitten me again, the little b———," he said, with a blissful smile.

Then, he remembered.

"It's only a passing phase. Money, and all that. It's got no importance. There's something different coming. I know."

Barry did not doubt it.

The sailor fumbled about in his breast pocket and pulled out a quartern bottle. He took out the cork, sniffed, then shook the bottle. "Have a peg."

And Barry, who did not like raw whiskey, or strange bottles, took a peg.

## *Case-Histories*

I

The Mother had wanted
To be a missionary in Africa,
So the Son's novel
Must be printed in Paris.

II

When I remarked at table
"My parents died before I was born",
The lady who had praised my German
Said "But that is impossible".

W. H. AUDEN

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

# *Shakespeare's Dedication*

AT some time in the middle fifteen-eighties Shakespeare came to London in search of a livelihood, and more: in search of the means to re-establish the fortunes of his family. We may guess that he arrived in London by 1586, we may make more or less plausible conjectures concerning the manner of his occupation after his arrival; but the one thing we *know* is that in 1593 he had written a beautiful, and within its own limits a masterly poem, *Venus and Adonis*, and that he was dedicating it to a young nobleman, the Earl of Southampton, in language which, though it may sound unduly humble to us who regard Shakespeare as one of the wonders of the world, would sound with dignity and independence surprising to an Elizabethan ear.

Compare the language in which Shakespeare addressed the young Earl of Southampton with that of a dedication made at the same time to the same young nobleman by a writer who lacked neither courage nor genius—Thomas Nashe. Nashe's language is fulsome; to-day it is comic in its exaggeration, but then it was natural. "Incomprehensible", says Nashe to Southampton, "is the height of your spirit, both in heroical resolution and matters of conceit. Unreprievably perisheth that book whatsoever to waste paper, which on the diamond rock of your judgment disasterly chanceth to be shipwrackt. . ." But thus Shakespeare:

"Right Honourable,—I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolisht lines to your Lordship, nor how the worlde will censure mee for choosing so strong a proppe to support so weake a burthen, onely if your Honour seem but pleased, I account my selfe highly praised, and vowe to take advantage of all idle houres, till I have honoured you with some graver labour. But if the first heire of my invention prove de-

formed, I shall be sorie it had so noble a god-father: and never after eare so barren a land, for feare it yeeld me still so bad a harvest. I leave it to your Honourable survey, and your Honor to your heart's content which I wish may alwaies answere your owne wish, and the world's hopefull expectation.—Your Honor's in all dutie, William Shakespeare."

Surely, this dedication is, in its kind, a lovely thing. We may say that Shakespeare had the knack of making all things lovely, and that it is merely a trick of the golden pen by which the marriage of deference and dignity is accomplished. I have no great belief in the effect of a trick of the pen; I think that even in so seeming-slight a matter as the grace of this dedication, more than a trick was required; some motion of the heart as well. And we may note that Shakespeare, in promising some graver labour if *Venus and Adonis* be well received, is careful to promise only what he can perform. He will take advantage of all *idle* hours. He is a journeyman of the theatre who can give no more than his spare time to the composition of poems for his patron. That he will give; and that, so far as we can tell, he did give. In another year, the graver labour was accomplished: *The Rape of Lucrece.* The dedication is brief, and the tone is changed:

"The love I dedicate to your Lordship is without end: whereof this Pamphlet without beginning is but a superfluous Moity. The warrant I have of your Honourable disposition, not the worth of my untutord Lines, makes it assured of acceptance. What I have done is yours, what I have to doe is yours, being part in all I have, devoted yours. Were my worth greater, my duety would show greater, meane time, as it is, it is bound to your Lordship; To whom I wish long life still lengthened with all happinesse.—Your Lordship's in all duety, William Shakespeare."

This time it is not lines that are dedicated, but love; and the

careful devotion of "all idle hours" gives way to the large surrender: "What I have done is yours, what I have to do is yours, being part in all I have, devoted yours." A dedication is, indeed, far removed from a confession. Yet it is hard, and for me impossible, to believe that the words of the second dedication coming from the writer of the first have not their intimate meaning. There was a progress in dedication.

It happens that this word "dedicate" was one of Shakespeare's favourite words. He obtained from it, in his poetry, some of his most beautiful effects. Of these, one or two, at least, will come unaided to the memory of the reader: the others will be glanced at in this essay one by one. For the history of this lovely word in Shakespeare seems to me of some significance.

Before the dedication of *Venus and Adonis* to the Earl of Southampton in 1593, the words "dedicate" and "dedication" are nowhere to be found in his plays. Probably, none of these plays was altogether his play, and he meant what he said when he called *Venus and Adonis* "the first heir of his invention". It was the child of his invention, whereas the earlier plays had been invented before he put his hand to them. But in them his handiwork is plentiful; yet the word "dedicate", which he was to use so exquisitely, is not in it. For young Clifford's speech at the end of the second part of *Henry VI* (v. ii, 31) which contains the word, is manifestly an addition made to the play in or about 1598. There is nearly ten years' difference between the rhythm and diction of lines 31-53 and those of the surrounding verses.

The word "dedicate" enters Shakespeare's vocabulary in 1593, and the occasion is his actual dedication of his first book; it next appears a year later, in 1594, when he dedicates his second book to the same man. Southampton had been pleased with *Venus and Adonis*, and Shakespeare had fulfilled his promise to take advantage of all idle hours. But now he dedicated not merely his new poem, not merely his love, but all himself—"all I am,

devoted yours".

Was he serious? It is impossible for me to read the Sonnets as courtly exercises in compliment. I am one of those who must needs believe that with this key Shakespeare unlocked his heart. The change of tone between the two actual dedications of *Venus* and *Lucrece* only confirms me in the supposition I find necessary. And the beautiful sonnet—the only one—in which the word occurs (No. 82) gives still more colour to this belief that Shakespeare took his act of dedication seriously.

> I grant thou wert not married to my Muse,
> And therefore mays't without attaint o'erlook
> The dedicated words which writers use
> Of their fair subject, blessing every book.
> Thou art as fair in knowledge as in hue,
> Finding thy worth a limit past my praise,
> And therefore art enforced to seek anew
> Some fresher stamp of the time-bettering days,
> And do so, love; yet when they have devised
> What strained touches rhetoric can lend,
> Thou truly fair wert truly sympathized
> In true plain words by thy true-telling friend;
> And their gross painting might be better used
> Where cheeks need blood; in thee it is abused.

Shakespeare is speaking here not of sonnets, but of dedications; and the signs are that he is hurt. In his dedications he has spoken the truth, and truth in Southampton's case is all the grace that is needed. He is disappointed that his young patron is beguiled by "the strained touches rhetoric can lend". Of these we have seen a good example in Nashe's hyperbole of flattery.

"I grant thou wert not married to my Muse", says Shakespeare; but the undertone of implication is that Shakespeare had indulged himself with the belief that he was. And that fits exactly

with the situation which the two successive dedications themselves suggest. Shakespeare, the man of 29, had fallen in love with the young nobleman of 19. A ridiculous thing to do, perhaps. That is a matter of opinion. More important for our present purposes, and for a realization of Shakespeare's nature, is to recognise the fact that such things have happened, do happen, and, so far as we can tell, always will happen.

The evidence, as I read it, is that Shakespeare's dedications had been very serious indeed. When he said to the young Earl that all that he was, was devoted his, he meant it. We may say that he was cheating himself, and that he was investing the relation of patron and poet with the glamour of illusion. The real point, if that be our judgment, is that Shakespeare was the kind of man who needed to invest with the glamour of real devotion the equivocal, and often merely sordid, relation between patron and poet. He believed not merely what he wanted, but what he needed, to believe. He loved his young patron, and the act of dedicating his poems to him was an act, not of the calculating mind, but of the heart and soul.

The simple facts are in harmony with this supposition. Never again to the end of his life did Shakespeare dedicate a volume to any man. What he had done, for Southampton, he had done once for all. Whatever happened between them, this act of his should stand alone. Again, we may say: pure accident, it simply happened that Shakespeare wrote no more poems, and wrote no more dedications. It is possible. I am merely concerned to point out that the terms of the dedications themselves, the tone of the sonnet which speaks of the dedications, and the fact that Shakespeare dedicated no more, fall into natural and unforced harmony with the story whose outlines we gather from the sequence of the Sonnets themselves.

Not only are these simple facts thus in natural harmony, but the more delicate evidences to which we have already alluded.

Before the actual dedication of *Venus and Adonis* the word "dedicate" is nowhere to be found in Shakespeare's plays. In the actual dedications and in the sonnet which speaks of them, the word is used simply: Shakespeare dedicates his book; then he dedicates his love; then all that he is. There is progressive dedication. The new word takes on a depth of intimate meaning.

With a suddenness almost startling, "dedicate" becomes a precious word in Shakespeare's language. A little while before, it did not exist, now it is elected to convey the tenderest and most exquisite meanings. We have only to listen. It describes the birth of love in Romeo:

> But he, his own affections' counsellor,
> Is to himself—I will not say how true—
> But to himself so secret and so close,
> So far from sounding and discovery,
> As is the bud bit with an envious worm,
> Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air
> Or *dedicate* his beauty to the sun. (I, i, 146)

Or, in *Twelfth Night*, it springs to Shakespeare's mind to describe the disappointed Antonio's devotion to Sebastian:

> A witchcraft drew me hither;
> That most ingrateful boy there by your side,
> From the rude sea's enraged and foamy mouth
> Did I redeem; a wreck past hope he was:
> His life I gave him and did thereto add
> My love, without retention or restraint,
> *All his in dedication.* (V, i, 75)

We cannot escape the echo: "What I have done is yours; what I have to do is yours; being part in all I have, devoted yours." Or, in a lighter vein, it is used by Benedick in *Much Ado* to describe Claudio's infatuation for Hero, while he is blind to his own for Beatrice:

"I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he *dedicates his behaviours to love*, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love" (II, iii, 7)

"Dedication" and love appear to be part of a single thought, or a single experience. A natural collocation, it may be said. Natural or not, it was unknown to Shakespeare's language before he dedicated to Southampton. And who can tell whether it is not largely by the magic of Shakespeare's language that the collocation seems so natural to us to-day?

Or again, the image from the description of Romeo in love, as the bud bit with an envious worm ere he can "dedicate his beauty to the sun" appears, magically changed, in the picture of Henry V on the morning before Agincourt:

For forth he goes and visits all his host,
Bids them good morrow with a modest smile
And calls them brothers, friends and countrymen.
Upon his royal face there is no note
How dread an army hath enrounded him;
Nor doth he *dedicate one jot of colour*
Unto the weary and all-watched night. (IV, Chor. 32)

There beauty and valour are one. In young Clifford's thrilling speech at the end of *Henry VI* (*Part* 2) it is to valour alone that dedication is made; but what dedication is, is plainly and passionately declared:

O war, thou son of Hell,
Whom angry heavens do make their minister,
Throw in the frozen bosoms of our part
Hot coals of vengeance! Let no soldier fly.
He that is *truly dedicate to war*
*Hath no self-love*, nor he that loves himself
Hath not essentially, but by circumstance,
The name of valour. (V, ii, 33)

Dedication is utter self-surrender, to love, to valour, or, in Isabella's lovely words to Angelo in *Measure for Measure*, to God:

> *Isab.*: Hark how I'll bribe you: good my lord, turn back.
> *Ang.*: How! bribe me!
> *Isab.*: Ay, with such gifts that heaven shall share with you.
>
> Not with fond shekels of the tested gold,
> Or stones whose rates are either rich or poor
> As fancy values them; but with true prayers
> That shall be up at heaven and enter there
> Ere sun-rise, prayers from preserved souls,
> From fasting maids *whose minds are dedicate*
> *To nothing temporal.* (II, ii, 145)

Already we have chronicled every occasion on which the word "dedicate" is used by Shakespeare from the time of his dedication of *Venus and Adonis* until *Measure for Measure.* We have omitted none. Can it be mere accident that we have compiled a tiny anthology of perfect felicities? Or does not the experience rather confirm our surmise that the word itself was precious?

Can it be mere accident again that the word which has been used to express such exquisite or heroic self-devotions, suddenly takes on a sinister meaning. It is now Cressida's word, at the moment when Troilus is aching to believe that his integrity and truth to her (his "dedication", in fact)

> Might be affronted with the match and weight
> Of such a winnowed purity in love.

It is Troilus, alas, who is dedicated; but it is Cressida who speaks the word:

> *Pan.*: What, blushing still? Have you not done talking yet?
> *Cres.*: Well, uncle, what folly I commit, I *dedicate* to you.
> (III, ii, 102)

Or it describes the bitter disillusion of Timon, bitten by the rankling tooth of man's ingratitude:

1 *Serv.:* So noble a master fall'n! All gone! and not
One friend to take his fortune by the arm,
And go along with him!
2 *Serv.:* As we do turn our backs
From our companion thrown into his grave,
So his familiars to his buried fortunes
Slink all away, leave their false vows with him
Like empty purses pick'd; and his poor self,
*A dedicated beggar to the air,*
With his disease of all-shunn'd poverty,
Walks, like contempt, alone. (IV, ii, 6)

The poetry is superb; the use of the word magnificent. But the human emotion how changed! We cannot but remember the former dedication to the air, of which the rose-bud in *Romeo* was cheated. We remember too the false vows of Cressida. It may be mere accident that somewhere in the background of "dedication" seems to hover a suggestion of treachery. And the same suggestion creeps out again in the use of the word in *Cymbeline*, where it forms part of Iachimo's loathesome suggestion to Imogen, and his treachery to Posthumus.

*Imo.:* Revenged!
How should I be revenged? If this be true—
As I have such a heart that both mine ears
Must not in haste abuse—if it be true,
How should I be revenged?
*Iach.:* Should he make me
Live, like Diana's priest, between cold sheets,
Whiles he is vaulting variable ramps,
In your despite, upon your purse? Revenge it.
*I dedicate myself to your sweet pleasure.* (I, vi, 128)

The word, it seems, could suffer no greater defilement than this. Yet perhaps in *Macbeth* it does, in the scene where Malcolm makes trial of Macduff. Macduff is being bitterly disillusioned while Malcolm tells of his vices. "There's no bottom, none, in my voluptuousness", says Malcolm. With weary cynicism Macduff replies:

> Boundless intemperance
> In nature is a tyranny; it hath been
> The untimely emptying of the happy throne
> And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
> To take upon you what is yours: you may
> Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
> And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink:
> We have willing dames enough; there cannot be
> That vulture in you, to devour so many
> *As will to greatness dedicate themselves*,
> Finding it so inclined. (IV, iii, 66)

The use here touches an absolute of revulsion. The word is trampled on in the cold and ghastly joke of such "a dedication to greatness". The transvaluation of values is complete.

After that, the mere suggestion of yielding oneself up to a desperate and forlorn adventure is even comfortable. Thus the word is used, in a passage of pure poetic beauty, in the *Winter's Tale*, when Camillo warns Florizel against

> *a wild dedication of yourselves*
> *To unpath'd waters*, undream'd shores, most certain
> To miseries enough: no hope to help you,
> But as you shake off one to take another;
> Nothing so certain as your anchors, who
> Do their best office if they can but stay you
> Where you'll be loath to be. (IV, iv, 571)

The final use of the word, in *The Tempest*, is in Prospero's

story to Miranda:

> I, thus neglecting worldly ends, *all dedicated*
> *To closeness and the bettering of my mind*
> With that which, but by being so retired,
> O'er-prized all popular rate, in my false brother
> Awaked an evil nature. (I, ii, 89)

Dedication and treachery seem still to be close companions. But now the dedication itself is pure again; the word itself is no longer contaminated, as it was by Cressida and Iachimo and in *Macbeth*. It is simply that the dedicated soul is simple and by the fact of its dedication laid open to treachery. That is "the mystery of iniquity", and not even in *The Tempest* could Shakespeare solve it. He recognised it simply as a condition of an order of existence from which men must free themselves.

We have followed precisely the history of the word dedication in Shakespeare; we have examined every occasion of its use, save one. Is it mere fancy that impels us to believe that its story is not fortuitous? Till 1593 the word is unknown in Shakespeare; it appears then, quite simply, in two actual dedications, to the same young nobleman to whom the sonnets were written. These were the only dedications—or shall we say the only dedication?—which Shakespeare ever made. Hard upon this the word enters on a period of delicate metaphorical life, during which it is inseparably connected with true and complete devotion. "Dedication" holds the beauty of devotion: it is a beauty of language to describe a beauty of soul.

Abruptly, there is a change in its human quality. It is given over to cynicism, and made the accomplice of treachery. Dedication is no longer to love, but to lust; no longer of love, but of lust. Or the dedicated man, like Timon, is betrayed by his friends, or like Prospero, by his brother; or the outcast and desperate man is dedicated to the air, to the wild waters. Can it be all pure accident

that the lovely suggestion of the word is now altogether lost? Is it simply that in plays of "the tragic period" even a word must suffer a little tragedy of its own? The answer will not suffice. Iachimo need not have "dedicated" himself to Imogen, nor Macduff have caricatured the high associations of the word. The degradation here, at least, was deliberate, even though it were unconscious. Shakespeare is turning the barb in the wound.

What was the wound? How was it caused, and by whom was it caused? Perhaps the answer may be sought in the one remaining use of the word which we have so far forborne to chronicle. It is in *Timon*, and it comes at the very opening of that strange play. The poet, with the painter and the jeweller and the merchant, is standing in the great man's ante-room. Suddenly, the poet begins reciting to himself some lines which the painter indistinctly overhears:

*Pain.:* You are rapt, sir, in some work, *some dedication*
*To the great lord*
*Poet :* A thing slipp'd idly from me.
Our poesy is as a gum which oozes
From whence 'tis nourish'd: the fire i' the flint
Shows not till it be struck; our gentle flame
Provokes itself, and like the current flies
Each bound it chafes. What have you there?
*Pain.:* A picture, sir. When comes your book forth?
*Poet.:* Upon the heels of my presentment, sir. (I, i, 19)

The situation is clear. The poet has dedicated his book, and it waits only for formal presentation to the great lord to be made public. The presentation is accomplished in two lines later in the scene:

*Poet:* Vouchsafe my labour, and long live your lordship!
*Tim.:* I thank you; you shall hear from me anon:
Go not away. (I, i, 152)

So the poet awaits his reward from Timon's treasurer. While he is waiting, he accosts Apemantus:

*Poet:* How now, philosopher!
*Apem.:* Thou liest.
*Poet:* Art not one?
*Apem.:* Yes.
*Poet:* Then I lie not.
*Apem.:* Art not a poet?
*Poet:* Yes.
*Apem.:* Then thou liest: look in thy last work, where thou has feigned him a worthy fellow.
*Poet:* That's not feigned, he is so. (I, i, 213)

The poet is obviously sincere. His long previous talk with the painter shows him convinced of Timon's "good and gracious nature". It is not Timon who is unworthy, but "the glib and slippery creatures" whom his wealth attracts to seeming service. Not merely the poet's own expressed opinion, but the whole theme and conduct of the play make it impossible that Timon should have been in his mind, when the thing slipped idly from him. The thing is memorable, because it sticks out clear from the course and sense of the scene:

*Poet [reciting to himself]:* "When we for recompense have praised the vile
It stains the glory in that happy verse
Which aptly sings the good." (I, i, 15)

Either it is totally irrelevant, or the connection is that the thought of his dedication to the good Timon, whom he has aptly sung in happy verse, reminds the poet of a former dedication, wherein he praised the vile for recompense. By this past soil his sincere praise is now stained.

So, at the turning point of the history of the word "dedication" in Shakespeare's poetry, we find that it abruptly descends from

the heaven of metaphor to the earth of sordid experience. Only here, at the beginning of *Timon*, since it first entered Shakespeare's vocabulary, does the word return to its direct and most familiar use on the lips of a writer: the dedication of a book. There is nothing divine, nothing beautiful, nothing ideal about it. At this moment "dedication" is prostitution: "When we for recompense have praised the vile", and a prostitution that leaves behind it an enduring stain. And as we have seen, if there is one predominant strain in the later meaning of "dedication" in Shakespeare's poetry, it is precisely this of prostitution. On the lips of Cressida, of Macduff, and Iachimo this is, in the earthliest sense, its meaning.

*Cymbeline* is among the very latest plays of Shakespeare. *Timon*, *Troilus*, and *Macbeth* we cannot date precisely. They belong roughly together, and the accepted date for them is anything between 1606 and 1609. Did anything happen between those dates which might have made the word "dedication" suddenly turn to ashes in Shakespeare's mouth?

Something did happen then, and so far as we can tell at this distance of time, it was the one thing which must have had precisely this effect. In 1609 Shakespeare's intimate sonnets were published to the world. To Shakespeare, whose plays reveal him as beyond all men of his time (or of ours) sensitive in this matter of love, the publication must have been a fearful violation. And, ultimately, Southampton must have been responsible for it. Whether it was in deliberate malice, or indifferent contempt, or mere carelessness, that he allowed those sonnets to fall into the hands of an unscrupulous publisher, would have made no difference to the effect on Shakespeare of their publication. Malice in such an issue would be no worse than carelessness, although in fact carelessness is hardly conceivable.

What Shakespeare's relations with Southampton had been for the dozen years before the catastrophe of publication, we can

only guess. The passionate infatuation had certainly cooled, and probably there was real estrangement. The young nobleman, as he passed from youth to manhood, learned that his attachment to a poet and a strolling player was a thing to be forgotten. Shakespeare would have acquiesced in the necessity, and consoled himself with the thought that in each remained a memory of what had been. But when, perhaps many months before their actual publication, he learned that his sonnets had been handed over to the gutter-press of those days, then the last veil of possible illusion was torn away. All that had been was cankered. The sudden revulsion from the past was fearful; there came a moment of brutal injustice to himself, when it seemed to him not merely that Southampton was vile: but he himself was viler still. He had deliberately deceived his own soul: he had pretended love where he had sought reward: he had not dedicated, but prostituted himself. The self-revelation, though false, was appalling.

## *Preface to a Book of Verse*

"WHY can't you say what you mean straight out in prose?"
Well say it yourself: then say "It's that but more
or less perhaps or not that way or not
that after all." The meaning of a song
might be an undernote; this tree might mean
that leaf as much as trunk, branch, other leaves.
And does one know till one begins? And let's
look over hedges far as eyesight lets us,
since road's not surely road but road and hedge
and feet and sky and smell of hawthorn, horse-dung. . .
all this.

Say what I mean?

When, where,

which I?

A. S. J. TESSIMOND

L. A. PAVEY

# *The Maid*

SHE was reflecting as she sat watching the baby, with a world of love in her honest eyes, that she would not easily have found, in her provincial town, such another family as the Broads. She was a lucky girl. She had the domestic work she was anxious to do; in any quantity so long as she gave satisfaction. It was to her far preferable to factory work, the only alternative unless you were a showy waitress or genteel shop-girl. Esther could have been neither; at least, she told herself, not with any pleasure.

She had hoped there would be children, so that if necessary, after she had swept, scrubbed, polished, tidied, picked up, put away, re-arranged, sometimes run errands, sometimes cooked, she might have the privilege of nursing or soothing or even, if allowed, playing with them—all for natural love and affection and a maid-of-all-work's wages.

Then she had Tom. She did not, in this respect, with her forthright honesty, count herself the most blessed among girls; but Tom was there. Tom was Tom, he wanted her, and she knew of girls who would have been wild to get him, if they could have seen a chance. One or two of them were trying to make chances, as a matter of fact. Not that Tom would believe anything and everything he happened to hear about her. But men were queer. You never knew. They went off sudden, and you never really understood. Case after case she remembered. . . And Tom was worth sticking to—a good mechanic, big and strong. Difficult to manage sometimes, she admitted, and quite often hard in his ways, and hurtful. Not understanding girls, she expected. And sometimes he wanted too much. . . it was difficult then to know what to do or how to manage him. Though there again, if half what had been told her was true, other girls had had worse times. And

had sometimes got nothing out of it in the end except babies to mind. She could keep her Tom, she felt, or somehow or other get over the loss of him. She looked down at her big breasts, broad hips, firm legs. She was independent. Humble, not aggressive, but with a character that she couldn't see herself losing.

"Oh, John, darling boy!" She hugged her charge, who, in an access of babyish dependence, butted his head roughly into her breasts. It was a moment of ecstasy. How fortunate she was, to have this love allowed her, free: love she could gather with all her heart—not warily and circumspectly, like Tom's, or with yearnings that always had to be hedged by the knowledge that men couldn't or wouldn't understand. She sighed to herself that there were periods of such complexity in young women's lives. But perhaps you only had to be straightforward, that was all. Everything would come right then—like the fortune-teller had said on the pier last summer. How could he have known? She had been struck, proper, by that.

She crooned at John with an infinite tenderness and he broke into a laugh of pure delight when she hooked his finger and wrinkled her fresh, broad face at him. Such little things! Why could not she, why could not men, be content with little things? How much simpler, how very much better, everything would be!

Anyway, she told herself vigorously, so far as she was concerned there was Tom, and no one else. She had never been able to understand those fast and loose ones. At twenty-three she had no use for flightiness. She had played about a little—sheer fun—in her time, but she had realised when that sort of thing ought to stop. . . .

Those potatoes! Five minutes late! She hurried to put them on, after strapping John safely into his chair. Good, clean, useful work—what would potatoes be not properly cooked? Men planted, dug and sold them, but if she and her like, in thousands of houses, did not put the finishing touches to them, they'd be

regular wasted! Her grey eyes looked keenly for those useless eyes of the potatoes, eyes that were to be dug out ruthlessly, with a decisive, crisp scoop that always gave her quite a lot of satisfaction.

There was Mrs. Broad coming in! Lucky she had just put them in the saucepan, and popped them over the gas. . . And Mrs. Broad would say—there, was just saying it—"And how's my darling John? Well, Esther!"

Esther's heart was light, singing humbly but clearly, truly.

* * * * *

Tom liked that picture palace better than she did. She didn't like to say so to him, but she thought it a little bit vulgar. One or two of the pictures, indeed, were in her judgment so "soft" that she was driven to talk more than usual, not only in the intervals, but sometimes overlapping into the time which should have been occupied by strict attention to a film. Mainly she was concerned with household problems, how she contrived to do a dozen different jobs in an hour, the peculiarities of tradesmen and their lapses from strict rectitude, or the thoughtfulness of Mr. and Mrs. Broad ("a real lady and gentleman"). As for the children, and John especially, she found it difficult to express to Tom all she felt. And she was bound to notice that Tom's replies soon descended to the monosyllabic, then to grunts, almost to snarls. And at last, while watching loweringly, with fixed eyes, the progress of "Passion's Depths", he burst out shockingly, "And your Mr. Broad! I s'pose 'e knows 'ow to be'ave to yer, eh? No going after yer on the sly, w'en 'is missus ain't round, eh?"

She almost cried out with the pain of this accusation. "Oh Tom!" she exclaimed, "whatever puts these horrid thoughts into your head! He'd never dream of being anything but the kindest of gentlemen! He's not a little bit like—like that. . . ."

But Tom, his thoughts revolving on something within himself, grunted "Ur! Know them kind of gentlemen!"

She watched the rest of the film sadly, and said no more about her job and about the Broads. But the film was not merely soft, it was full of a silly dirtiness that made her want more than anything to be bending over John instead and watching for that slow wonderful laugh of his.

Quite suddenly Tom, while saying nothing to conciliate her, began to make endearing movements towards her. She felt the pressure from his hands first on her waist, then her thighs, and she put her own capable and roughened hand on that of her lover. She looked right and left sharply, full of a shamed sensation.

"Don't, Tom!" she whispered.

There was no more talk between them in the cinema. She asked him, with a trace of timidity, whether he liked the last picture, but got only a decisive "Nah! Sunday-school stuff!"

He was moody all along the road to her tram, then suddenly switched her into a by-road.

"When'r you goin' to marry me, Esther?"

Thousands of images crossed her mind in that epic moment. She had already been promised to Tom for a year, and had thought much about it. Now visions of selecting curtains for their little house, cutting bread, using Rinso, ornamenting the best room to her own taste, talking to the butcher in matronly fashion, waiting for Tom to come in to tea, while a nice scone sat in front of the fire, hanging out washing, with a bright quick smile for her neighbour. . . .

"When you like, Tom dear, you know," she said steadily.

"Three munse, then," he said huskily. "Eh?"

She nodded, staring hard away from him at the street light over the way.

But as Tom clumsily took her once more into his arms she could see herself weeping her farewells over John in a passionate abandonment, and full of sorrow at the kind, grave, regretful goodbyes of Mr. and Mrs. Broad. Life, thought poor Esther,

seemed as though it could never at any time give you one happy experience that was altogether unspoiled.

* * * * *

What it was that drove her that night to tell Tom so much of her last day at the Broads, and in particular so much that baby John had tried to say ("as if the dear little chap understood") she scarcely knew. Somehow, until then, she had not cared to talk much about the Broads. Both before her marriage and after, the scene in the cinema had been graven on her memory. It had given her, indeed, a profound shock.

But to-night as they sat at tea—her eyes watchful that everything on the table and in the room was just right, with that special degree of rightness befitting the abode of a mechanic earning a good and regular wage—some obscure instinct filled her with such uneasiness that she felt the plunge back into memories of her secure and happy servanthood a means of defence. She could not define this feeling, any more than, at that moment of obscure alarm, she could limit it.

It was not that Tom looked sullen, as he had done often enough. He was calm. But yet there was something, something. . . . She talked on fast, thinking to herself, "I'm being foolish, but I can't stop. . . If only he'd say something, or start talking to me about something else, it would be all right". She looked desperately at Tom. "An' Mr. Broad said to me, 'I do hope you'll be happy, Esther.' Just as—as though I shouldn't. . ." What had happened? What was that? She drew her hand mechanically across her face to wipe off the tea which Tom had flung there. For one horrified moment she had thought it was blood. "You an' yer blasted Mr. Broad!" Tom shouted. "It's me you're married to, ain't it?"

His chair crashed back into the hearth as he sprang for the door and hurled it open. She heard him curse the pictures in the narrow passageway as they bumped his elbows—the pictures they had

chosen with such care, out of spare weekly sixpences and shillings. The front door slammed, the gate rattled on its hinges, heavy footsteps dwindled, fell to silence.

She sat stupefied, looking at the empty cup, and still wiping with painful care all traces of the tea from her face and dress. Quickly she got up, washed the tea things and put all tidy. Then she sat down, looking into the fire, before which they were to have sat and talked, as though she now saw into a sudden new depth down through the flames. Married six months and fourteen days—no, fifteen! This surely could not be her just fate! Or was what she had done an unforgivable crime in a married woman—just to talk about her old master? Would not some husbands have understood and been glad to talk too about the happiest time of her life? And how many, she wondered, with the beginning of the anguish which she realised would not now leave her, how many would have—have done that? What Tom had done? Did he—could anyone do that, even to someone he disliked very much? Did he hate her? Even if she had been foolish (even if she had been terribly so, remembering as she did the cinema scene) was that such a dreadful crime? Could he not have been kind? She bent over double towards the fire and clenched her hands white in that tense trouble, hour by hour, until softly, almost without sound, she got up, set the supper for one, and with the clock at eleven, stole up to bed . . . nor was she asleep when he blundered in beside her, an hour later—nor had she been, save for a fitful doze, when the dawn crept into the little room.

At breakfast, and all that day, ashamed as his face had been, she waited in vain for the remorse and the love that alone could heal that mortal wound. Instead, there was sullen silence; it was as though he thought that terrible, terrible action of his a mere trifle. At last, unbelievingly, she had stolen a glance, when tea-time came once more, at that man she had told herself was "her Tom". And with a pang of fright she had thought she looked at

the face of a stranger. Not even a face she had known casually. With a flash of hysteria she was forced to remember that she had been, in deed and fact, married to him. . . .

Would he make no sign? Not even the tiniest? She was ready for forgiveness—it would be beautiful. She could condone even what had happened if she knew it had simply been through jealousy for her. But there was no sign. He took his tea from her as a matter of right, without a word. Twice her eyes were drawn irresistibly to his cup, with which yesterday he had flung . . . was she dreaming? She shuddered violently, and controlled her shudders immediately, lest—lest—she knew not what! There was not a question or a fear that she could face. This silence—this silence . . .

Immediately after tea he went out—noisily again, as though justifying himself, and immediately another, and even more terrible suspicion seized her. Was he playing her false with another girl? Did that explain everything? She stood quite still there in the little living-room, her arms and hands rigid, a pulse in her temples throbbing painfully. Why should he leave her with no word, even if he were true? Was that right?

She moved slowly about the room, touching little new things and remembering some little special joy about the purchase of each one. She did not understand this different life. At this time of day, six months ago, she would have been seeing the last of Baby John before he was carried up to bed saying "Taa . . . taa. . ."—long sweet sounds that loosed the heart-strings—and Mr. Broad would be standing watching him or saying something, with his quiet humour, to the other children. In his face that kindly comprehending look, and, too, just that little lost touch she saw in the faces of many decent men. Infinitely appealing!

In poignant distress of mind, and hardly knowing what she did, her limbs moving like automata, she reached the tiny hall, put on her hat and jacket, and went out. It was raining, but she

never even noticed that. Her errand was either to recapture a reality or to escape a phantom, she did not know which. She had no destination. Yet no time and no space passed, so far as she was aware, before she found herself, with the relief that old familiar, happy things can give, standing at the gate of Mrs. Broad's house. She literally could not have said how she came to be there. The agency of human legs, even of human volition, seemed an absurd explanation.

Like a girl in a trance she walked up to the house and rang the bell. Then she thought: there would be another girl! She turned sick with jealousy. There would be, there would be! Looking after Baby John, as a duty, never knowing the half hundred little things she knew about him, never even suspecting them. And—and—seeing nothing in Mr. Broad but the master who paid her wages, the lost child in him lost for ever. She covered her eyes with her hands. . . . .

It was Mr. Broad who came. She had the sensation of a drowning person who finds something solid in his hands. And she was still so bewildered with her trouble and the impossibility of explaining the inexplicable that she faltered, though with her eyes fixed on him, "I thought. . . I thought. . . ."

Her distress was apparent.

"Come in, Esther," he said, gently.

She went in submissively; though immediately, with a look almost of cunning, she looked about for her successor. . . .

"Mrs. Broad is out," said her old master, motioning her to sit down. "Now can I help you at all?"

She was tongue-tied. She stuttered something about trouble.

"Let me see, Esther, you haven't any parents, or relatives, or friends here?"

She shook her drooping head, mournfully, desperately.

Then he was quiet; it was difficult. Glancing up timidly, she saw again that lost look of his, as of a little boy confronted with a

big problem. She knew that to himself he was a sagacious man, finding the correct solution in the best way. She wanted to comfort *him*, to tell him it didn't matter, that he must not worry. Why, why had she come to worry him? Yet something honester, speaking quietly, but persistently to her, told her that she had known this was Thursday, and that Mrs. Broad was always out on Thursday. . . .

She could not have borne that he should have said a word, just then, about her marriage, or attempted some little consolation for her distress.

"I c—couldn't see Baby John?" she gasped.

Mr. Broad looked at her, shrewdly. "He's asleep. . . Yes, go up and see him if you wish, Esther."

She went eagerly out and up.

"Hm, hysterical slightly," muttered Mr. Broad. "Poor old Esther. Finding it a rough show, I expect. Good girl, too. What am I to say to her? Better see it through myself, I suppose—she needs somebody. Cruelty to turn her out."

She came back to look at him with a world of shy thanks and appeal in her eyes, and in a moment had burst out, "Have you a new girl, Mr. Broad?"

"No, Esther. We tried one, and we're expecting another."

It broke from her, in a wail.

"Couldn't I come back, Mr. Broad?"

He was startled this time. He looked at her keenly.

"But," he said, "you're married. Your husband. . . ."

She clenched and unclenched her hands nervously. "Yes, I can't," she whispered. "Of course. I'm married. . . ."

"Now, Esther, you're in trouble of some sort. We want to be your friends. Promise me to come round and talk to Mrs. Broad, will you? Perhaps between us we shall be able to put things right for you."

Kindly, she saw he was, this time, but too knowledgeable.

There was no blind spot. She could not well stay longer. Kind, kind, kind—what was kindness? She got up.

"Let me tell her you'll come to-morrow. It might do you good."

Esther nodded, afraid to speak. She stared at the dining-room door, as she walked to the hall, to her doom. Again before she could check herself she had asked, in a torrent of fierce whispering, "Oh, sir, can I put the gramophone on? Just one, please... Oh, I oughtn't to bother you!" Her voice rose to a thin wail.

He stopped to stare at her. For the first time he was seriously embarrassed. He was silent a few moments.

He thought, "She's really not responsible. . . Better see it through if it'll help her!" He threw up his hands in a gesture of assent, and went back at once to his room, with the look of a man somewhat too highly tried.

Feverishly she switched on the light, pulled out the records. One she put on, two, three.

Then she left the room, calmly. Mr. Broad came out to look at her, searchingly, and with a touch of irony he could not restrain. She returned his look profoundly, beautifully.

"I ought not to have bothered you so much, Mr. Broad," she said in a voice so low that he stooped to catch it. "You were more than kind, more than kind, sir!" She hurried out. She could feel him staring after her as she went through the gate.

"Kindness, kindness!" her heart wailed. She was treading the path back home, blind to thought.

She could see him bending over, winding up the gramophone, as he had been, when she had first known that jumping in her heart! While she had been playing with Baby John, and she had heard those three tunes. One, two, three. "Oh!" she moaned, fearfully, ecstatically, miserably, with a world of elation and despair, "I've seen him! How I love him! How I love him!"

JOHN COWPER POWYS

# *Dorothy M. Richardson—II*

LOVERS of Miss Richardson's books recognise that like all great writers she really and truly creates a completely new world out of her own temperament, even while what in her deepest honesty she feels—and that is the paradox of all genius—is that she is simply *expressing the truth.* Dostoievsky would say the same of what he himself did, so would Hardy, so would Conrad, so would Couperus. The passionate zest with which genius flings itself upon the slippery, deadly, phoca-smelling Proteus-Truth is something which creates incidentally, and as it were "sideways", a world that is in reality a very particular and very special truth. How few English writers there are living to-day of whom one can say in the tone in which one says "this is a Dickens scene, a Dostoievsky scene, a Henry James scene"—"this is a scene just like what happens in So-and-So's books!" But this is exactly what one does find oneself saying, and thinking too, with regard to Dorothy Richardson's work. And the matter is more subtle still; for it is not exactly that one would point to any particular person, resembling, shall we say, the landlady Mrs. Bailey, or that frail and naughty object of ambiguous charity, Miss Dear, and say, "Oh, how Dorothy-Richardson-like!" It is more as if one would exclaim when entering any unknown house, or any strange room full of people, or passing along any city-street not quite devoid of character—"what would Dorothy Richardson make of this?"

And the implication of this difference goes to the root of the matter because it is a beautiful illustration of that profound *feminine* insight in this writer, apart altogether from humour or sentiment, which is her grand achievement. It implies in fact that whereas Henry James or Dickens or Dostoievsky project "in

vacuo," after the manner of *men* of genius, each of his own particular brain-world or imagination-world, or nerves-world, Dorothy Richardson, after the manner of a woman of genius, concentrates her power upon pursuing the evasive but ultimate essence imprinted, one might think, upon the very air itself, by every emotional and psychic and visual promontory of consciousness. By this I mean that the impression produced upon the reader of her books—whether justly or unjustly—is that every single one of her characters has a living "original" or a dead "original"; has at any rate *not* been created "in vacuo." On the contrary, one feels sure that all three Karamazov brothers, together with Stavrogin, Svidrigailov, Peter Stepanovitch, Kirilov, Shatoff, General Epanchin, the mysterious father of the Raw Youth, &c. &c. &c., emerge from Dostoievsky's essentially masculine brain, like so many "daughters" born straight from the brain of Zeus. Now it is quite possible that if one knew the actual truth this impression would turn out to be erroneous. Dostoievsky might astonish us (in his Elysian Limbo) by naming the "originals" of all these figures. Miss Richardson might astonish us by swearing, across her heart, that neither Mrs. Bailey nor Miss Dear, nor Michael, nor the spirited young ladies she always speaks of as "the girls", nor Hypo, nor even Harriet have any original at all save in her own bosom! But even if this did turn out to be the case, I think my contention would still remain true. But I should be driven to plead that, man-like, Dostoievsky treats real people *as if* they were figments of his brain, while, woman-like, Dorothy Richardson treats imaginary people *as if* she had taken them from real life. In her art of presenting all her characters, our author has not a single device of style that is not saturated with her main purpose. Never, I say, never, has a writer been less "affected", less wilfully "queer". Her intermittent omission of "inverted commas" for instance, how it increases that magical feeling of being transported into a world of pure consciousnesses, all of

whom are aware of one another's peculiarities *immediately* like the angels of scholastic speculation. This, of course, is often the truth among people who know one another well in real life, but its implications have been neglected by most writers. One might, in fact, almost say that sometimes in Dorothy Richardson her extreme sensitiveness to what her characters are feeling is so intense that one forgets the very expressions of their faces as the conversations proceed, forgets in fact that they have bodies at all and just *feels oneself* into the moving ripples of their thoughts as if one were a water-fly crossing the criss-cross surface of that wind-blown water. Oh, it is a complete continent, a submerged Lost Atlantis of feminine susceptibility, this world that Dorothy Richardson brings to light. The peculiar egoism of Miriam; how different it is from the usual passionate, sentimental, humorous egoism of women-writers' heroines! And yet what an enormous tract of feminine consciousness and subconsciousness is revealed here that all women must confess to if they are honest! What, in fact, is this terrific, this insatiable, this implacable life-urge seeking? It is seeking a certain set of very intimate, half-physical, half-psychic, sensations of well-being. The whole drama of these nine astonishing "book-chapters" turns upon this pivot. How is Miriam getting on? Not in regard to love—though *that* enters characteristically enough—not in regard to "success" or money; although these things, especially negatively, play their part; but in regard to her mysterious pursuit of a certain Vision, which does not apparently arrive, as in Proust (and the present reviewer thoroughly agrees with her in this) by the pure chance of little isolated incidents, but by the premeditated plans she makes in advance, escaping from this or that intolerable situation—North London, for example!—and deliberately conspiring with Fate to obtain "work" or "holidays" under very particular conditions. One naturally knows not yet what developments in Miriam future chapters will reveal; but this, I think, one may safely hazard—

there will be no neat "dénouement", no rounding off of everything in the attainment of a certain spiritual "formula" as is presented to us and rather disconcertingly presented to us by Proust in those final two volumes of his. The disillusioned continental realism, implied in the absence of everything "voulu", and in the prominence given to everything that comes by accident, seems to drop away in these last chapters. Time comes a little too cleverly "full-circle" and the characters of the story, with their locks so dramatically grey and their dispositions so appropriately crystallised, loom upon us now, for the first time in the whole work, as "eidola" invented by the author rather than as pure transcripts from reality, just as the anti-Platonic concept, of the Eternal Being in us nourished upon temporary nourishment, with which the whole work ends, leaving the author resolved to begin to write, rounds everything off in a manner so metaphysically satisfactory as to verge a little, a very little, on that unenviable condition "of being too good to be true." No! Whatever happens in the tenth volume of *Pilgrimage*, we must not allow our author even to dream of "rounding off" this book for many a long year. Perhaps this mysteriously feminine genius will discover some way, along her own lines, as Dostoievsky, alone among masculine novelists, has done along *his* own lines, of reconciling the artist's and poet's craving for shape, for form, for a definite issue, for a desired consummation, with the philosopher's mania for slurring over no aspect, however paradoxical, however trivial, however disgusting, however recalcitrant of the truth about the way things drift and flutter and peter out.

As Coleridge so profoundly remarked, "every original writer must *create the taste* by which he is appreciated." Dorothy Richardson had probably not the remotest conception as to where, as to how far, her Daimōn was going to drive her, when she began the now famous first chapters of *Pointed Roofs*. This book was her *Almayer's Folly*; and it is an interesting piece of

critical history that both these surprising inaugurations of completely new "genres" in literature should have been ushered into the light under the "imprimatur" of Edward Garnett. Lovers of Dorothy Richardson have good reason, too, to feel gratitude to the distinguished writer, J. D. Beresford, who, at the very start, had the wisdom to see how far this new Pentecostal wind threatened to carry its Possessed. The chances are, however, that in spite of these two eminent men's appreciation, it will be left to some more reckless and daring thinker than any produced by our generation to do full justice to the new gospel of the art of life which these nine volumes contain within their choice, scrupulous, suggestive, pondered pages. The creation of Miriam Henderson has sent these books forth, through the English-speaking world, "numbering the intellects", and a whole new way of taking life is revealed here for those who have the wit to catch its drift. They are much more than a novel; much more than a study in feminine psychology. They contain the seed of a new philosophy of the senses, indeed of a new philosophy of life. That crude, disagreeable and yet suggestive book, Max Stirner's *Ego and Its Own*, might have inaugurated this philosophy. It missed its aim, as did also the work of Walter Pater, by a certain curious distance, on account of his masculine scrupulosity and his masculine fastidiousness. Women are far less fastidious, as well as far less rational than men, and any "philosophy of the senses" that is really going to mount up to a mystical vision, and embrace the essence of things, must not be too "picky and choosy". While Pater, because of his fastidiousness, could get his sense-ecstasies only from things several times removed from the chaos of reality, our gallant Miriam has the courage (just as when she smoked to the bitter end her first cigarette) to chew the apples of experience in a much more wholesale manner; to swallow in fact those old profane apples, picked up from the ground, as they fall from the mystic tree of knowledge, wasp-eaten as they

are in so many places. She has the courage, too, not to spit out the green skin, not to spit out the perilous juice, not to make too wry a face when, throwing the remains away, she catches sight of the snug maggot at the core! I think it will be along these lines, along the lines of the presence in the feminine sensibility of something almost Rabelaisian in its unfastidiousness, certainly of something Montaignesque, that posterity, losing the very names of most of us, will come to find so much grist for its cosmic mill in the work of Dorothy Richardson. For she accepts *the mystery of what is* in all the terrible-sweet flavour of its stabbing, raking, harsh, gritty chaos; neither extenuating aught nor setting down aught in malice! With that maternal acceptance so puzzlingly indiscriminate (not ironical) such as only women have, she accepts us all, at our back-and-belly value, at our face-value, at our pit-of-the-stomach value; and she accepts the works of our hands, too, in all their painted, shiny, oil-reeking, childish crudity! That is why her books are obscure to many men. That is why Mrs. G. B. Stern finds them so appallingly tedious. They are as they are because the nature of things is as it is. There must have been something (let us admit it) of Dorothy Richardson's comprehensive, stoical, all-embracing aplomb about the creative energy that originally started this singular world—and something, too, of her capricious aversions and antipathies when the world's contrarieties began to appear! How does she work? She works with "memory". But her method is not mere recapitulation. She by no means uses *all* the memories which one knows she *must* possess. On the other hand many "artistic", and even genuinely æsthetic people must, one feels, frequently pause in astonishment, as they read, before *the kind of thing* that she chooses to pluck forth from her reservoirs of memory and enlarge upon and elaborate and spin out so fine!

What must amaze such people is the apparently wilful choice of unpicturesque, unpromising, un-ideal, and in many instances

actually unpleasant aspects of reality. And yet all these queer things and all these queer aspects of things, with the weather stains of chaos thick upon them, are treated by her with their ramifications and convolutions as if they were carefully selected, ideal symbols of human life. Elaborately, patiently, intensively does she treat them. She treats them as Walter Pater treats his noble platonic essences, as Proust treats his meticulous narrations, as Goethe treats his fossils, his herbarium, his musée d'art. And all the while, to the romantically artistic temperament they are devoid, these quaint collections of actuality, of everything that is significant or that possesses an ideal meaning. They have no ideal meaning. They are simply *there*; purposelessly, wantonly, hopelessly there! The deeper one goes in the attempt to fathom the method of Dorothy Richardson, the more mysterious it all becomes. She is absolutely unique in this method of hers. Joyce could not imitate her if he tried. No one could imitate her. No one can. Her extraordinary style is not a rationally invented thing. It is oracular. It is a kind of poetry. I tell you this woman is a Pythian soothsayer. One can only surmise that what she does is to cast a deep-sea net, weighted down with heavy leaden weights, into her memory and then make a blind, almost prophetic use of all she finds in that occult scoop. Not into her normal rational memory. It is a far more exciting and mysterious plunge than that. It is into her profoundest subconscious nature that this deep-sea net descends. Is it for this reason that there is a doom upon her to guard and protect with a kind of maternal fury *all* she brings up to the surface? Does she feel that to exercise rational or ideal or purposeful *selection* upon what this net brings up would be a betrayal of the very secret of creation? Think for a minute of the emotional *purpose* of Hardy, of the romantic *purpose* of Conrad, of the psycho-æsthetic *purpose* of Henry James. All these diffused underlying "purposes" give unity, glamour, interest to their books. Proust himself, with his grand

cult of the creative and destructive processes of time, has his ultimate intention, the rounding off of the whole dramatic "scenario". Dorothy Richardson, to the most devoted appreciation, offers no such "purpose", no such hope of a rational "rounding off", no such mounting-up to an architectural dénouement. Is this because of a weakness in her compared with these masters of fiction? I think not. I think it is strength. I think it is because her genius is that of the nature of all women. Women represent the eternal growth of life itself. And of life, as we know, there is necessarily no end. The only end of the "Pilgrimage" of Miriam that one can contemplate with equanimity is Miriam's own death. Dorothy Richardson has this in common with the old, immemorial story-teller of our race, with those ancient, bardic "fabulators" (for whom adventure must follow adventure while the hero lives) that the only unity given to this chaos of impressions is the identity of the consciousness that welcomes them. It is not the outrage of chaos, of purposelessness in things, from which Miriam suffers. She rather enjoys, in her stoic heathen way, all that. It is a series of very definite miseries that make her cry, that hit her to the heart, that send her reeling and staggering into the inner sanctum of her soul. One of the worst of these miseries is what she suffers when only eighteen-years-old at that boarding-school of the three Miss Pernes in North London. One of the most pathetic touches in the whole literature of lonely adventure, a touch of the kind that, I suppose, women alone can understand to the full, is that passage about the veil, in fact the two veils, which the youthful Miriam kept in a drawer in that unconsecrated shared bedroom. But even in the book called *Backwater*, where this heart-breaking imbroglio at the very threshold of her life occurs, she has her moments of ecstasy.

"Gathering up the newspaper she folded it neatly, put it on the hall table and went slowly upstairs, watching the faint reflection of the half-lowered hall gas upon the polished balustrade.

The staircase was cold and airy. Cold rooms and landings stretched up away above her into the darkness. She became aware of a curious buoyancy rising within her. It was so strange that she stood still for a moment on the stair. For a second, life seemed to cease in her, and the staircase to be swept from under her feet. . . . 'I'm alive' . . It was as if something had struck her, struck right through her impalpable body, sweeping it away, leaving her there shouting silently without it. I'm alive. . . I'm alive. . . She tried once or twice deliberately to bring back the breathless moment standing still on a stair. Each time something of it returned. 'It's me, *me*; this is *me* being alive', she murmured with a feeling under her like the sudden drop of a lift."

The chapter containing this passage ends with the words, "What's the use of feeling like that if it doesn't stay? It doesn't change anything. Next time I'll make it stay. It might whisk me right away. There's something in me that can't be touched or altered. Me. If it comes again—— If it's stronger every time. . . Perhaps it goes on getting stronger till you die."

May it not be that the only possible purpose or unity or meaning in this story of Miriam is to be found in those words—"perhaps it goes on getting stronger till you die"? It is here doubtless that Miss Richardson is the grand Heretic of Fiction. The very rudiments of the art of *the novel*, as distinct from the old story-telling of the famous "fabulators" of early times, are surely from the orthodox point of view that all "notes" should be gathered up in one crashing crescendo at the close. In the Miriam-story one begins to feel, as one reaches *Oberland*, that there has been no preparation at all, certainly no artful and elaborate preparation, for any kind of dramatic "finale". Miriam's life has been, and still is, an epitome, just as Faust's is an epitome, of the growth of the human soul. Are we not justified in feeling that it is just because our common human soul is here considered as a feminine one that the whole orthodox character-developing

drama, including such things as the seduction of Gretchen and the cultivation of barren land (both such masculine achievements) and ending with a final apotheosis, is eliminated in favour of a more devious, a more lyrical, a more subjective method of spiritual progress? Faust is, as we remember, soothed and healed by the contemplation of a non-human magic in natural scenery. But our Miriam-Fausta makes of such non-human contemplations the very "entelechy" of her life. She began doing this when she was six years old; but it was down on a lonely strip of beach at Brighton, out of reach of the crowds, that she first realised all its full implications. I quote again from *Backwater:*

"She must keep the secret to herself. . . In Germany she had found it again and again; and at Banbury Park, though it could never come out and surround her, it was never far off. . . . It lay now (at Brighton) all along the deserted promenade and roadway as you went home to lunch, and at night it spoke in the plump, plump of the invisible sea—against the lower woodwork of the pier pavilion."

This secret cult of her, this furtive pursuit of a non-human Holy Grael, is what Miriam is thinking about when she describes herself as "profane" and her happiness a "profane" thing. She means that it is an egoist's happiness (as indeed it is) and she means that it is a happiness that would be seriously imperilled (as indeed it would be) by any too-close, too-devoted, too-exacting a human love.

The most powerful passages in all the nine volumes are, in my opinion, those in which she pursues this furtive cult; and perhaps the most powerful of all she has written is the passage describing her strange, cold, heathen ecstasy when she decides to preserve her liberty and independence as against her feeling for Michael.

It is very significant of what Dorothy Richardson has had the genius to do, this tracking down in the dim unconscious labyrinths of its desire, and in the subterranean channels of its blind

impetus, the will to pure, unalloyed, unspoiled *life*, that she would never regard it as a derogation from her talents, but rather as a high commendation of them, if anyone were to say "how woman-like your books are"! And the more one ponders on the un-used, un-developed, un-exploited treasures of sensibility that exist in the simplest women, and are constantly being perverted and side-tracked by both stupid and clever men, does this new departure appear startling and tremendous.

One amusing and perhaps scandalous piece of literary psychology the present writer would like to be daring enough to hazard, and that is that no very sensual or very vicious man (in an erotic sense) would endure to read a vast mass of Dorothy Richardson's work. Her subtle and penetrating art might indeed in this sense be used by cynical persons as a sort of Ithuriel wand to test the virtue, or the reverse, of any æsthetic, wayfaring Comus among males! The point I am fumbling after is this, that there is so much description of women when they are alone together (and in anything but provocative moods and postures) that any satyrishly inclined epicure in feminine charm would be constantly shocked and horrified. One might be even tempted to think, as one notes the difference, that most famous feminine writers always write with half an eye upon the sex-interest of their male readers. Certainly one of the most beguiling and (from a "best-seller" point of view) one of the most popular of feminine devices in writing, when a woman ceases from just being "clever" or playing "copy-cat" to the men-writers they especially admire, is a sort of deliberate literary "narcissism". This is a most seductive trick and lends itself better than anything else to the kind of "fine writing" that the crowd can follow. But Dorothy Richardson's Miriam is so entirely free from this that she does not even betray her conscious suppression of it by erring on the other side. Her attitude to herself is neither mock-modest nor erotically sentimental. It is a fascinating compound of the most mystical

sensationalism and the most natural, honest, realistic analysis.

One deeply-rooted trait in Miriam stems backwards, it is hard not to feel, directly to her author. I refer to her abnormal ear for musical euphonies and dissonances. Like Joyce, Miss Richardson is a born philologist; but, unlike Joyce, she uses her talent for word-coining not as an end in itself, full of metaphysical and scholastic revelations as to the cosmic constitution of things, but as a short-cut to the understanding and the exposition of human character. She is more than a philologist; she is a purist in the "King's English" and all deviations from this perfect speech strike her as both whimsically illuminating and a deplorable lapse from the true æsthetic standard. They appeal, too, to a vigorous and lively sense of humour in her; a humour sometimes as mischievous as a romping young girl's and sometimes as austere as a magisterial scholar. She is indeed a most sardonic mimic; and these mimicries of deviations from "King's English" play a larger part in her method than they do in any other living writer that I know of. It is not only a matter of coining new words for subtle feelings. It is a matter of expressing—by the humour of clipping words and tumbling and towzling words—many shades of affectional and pathetical understandings and misunderstandings between intimate relations and friends. In this humorous breaking up of the dignity of the language, in this lively mimicry of the actual sound of human speech, Dorothy Richardson is profoundly English. She is English, too, in a much deeper and more important matter, to which it is very necessary that critical allusion should be made, if we are to understand her underlying psychology. I refer to her contempt for the sort of human-too-human melodrama which has had such an appeal to writers of the Latin race. She gets rid of this human melodrama in a way that would cause, one feels, much nervous irritation to any French or to any Italian reader. Where Latin writers—even the most cynical—display passionate seriousness she will ramble off, at any tangent, into all manner of

whimsical, irresponsible *jeux d'esprit*, and where they—even the most sentimental—display levity she will display a profound, eager and disconcerting earnestness. Deeply English is her steady, persistent, undeviating preference for *the sensation of life* at all costs over the sentiment, or the passion, of the appropriate *gesture*.

In one respect these volumes contain a tragedy as appalling as Dante's Inferno; for though Miriam, we know, like the wayfarer in the Inferno, will herself come forth "to re-behold the stars", there remain those others who never can, those others, like the despairing little servant Flora and the unhappy half-foreigner Julia, whom we look at and pass under Miriam's guidance. Only those of us who know these volumes well get the full implication of the fate of some of these useful figures—and some of them are very near to Miriam Henderson's heart—a fate that the author pities so profoundly that the way she writes about them makes us feel—as we now and then do in real life and as we do when we are reading Dostoievsky— that *if there is not another life* after this life it is all a ghastly shame and a disgrace, in spite of a few people's good luck.

One grand advantage does the peculiar *proud-humbleness* of this writer give her above her sophisticated contemporaries—above Virginia Woolf, above the Sitwells, above Aldous Huxley. It enables her to retain her strong, fresh, exuberant, childlike zest for the old simple great things in philosophy and literature. She has not any need, as so many of us seem to have in these jaded days, to stir up her response to life by all manner of tricky "originalities". There is a certain obstinate, humorous, massive, deliberate *naïveté* about her approach to life that is not in the least degree ashamed of appearing pedantic. In this matter she is a true disciple of the wise Goethe. And it is just this refusal to play tricks with her natural intelligence that enables her authentic originality to sprout forth spontaneously, at its own sweet will,

and that gives it, when it does so, that calm, magical, oracular quality that makes one think of those pre-Socratic "logoi" of the old, great, natural philosophers, from whose vision of truth the direct, concrete, feminine insight has not been yet squeezed out by any dry, syllogistic, super-masculine Aristotle. The last of the nine volumes—or "chapters" if you will—of Miriam's *Pilgrimage* finds her pausing to look round, as it were, and take stock of what she has attained out of so many sharp experiences; and this pause, in a sort of quiet Pisgah contemplation, is represented by the snowy heights and the lonely tobogganning of *Oberland*. Here Miriam meets an entirely new set of people, in entirely new surroundings, and one watches a little anxiously to see how she will feel, how she will behave. All is well. One need not have been nervous. London is still faithfully there in the background of her consciousness, lodged there still in the deepest core of her inalienable self. And, with London as its secret sanctuary, her strong, un-doctrinaire, feminine socialism, and all her indignant awareness of "the armies of the homeless and the unfed" gather themselves together and harden themselves for resistance, among so many lovely sights, and among these rich inexperienced holiday-makers. Mrs. Harcourt, Eaden, the little Daphne, all these (like water-colour sketches suddenly come to life in a high mountain-lodge), rouse her to put forth the new integrity, the new independence which she has so desperately gained. But all these, like faint brownish blotches of humanity against the white snow, she escapes from even while they arrest her and while she influences them. Yet Switzerland gave her what she wanted, what she had come there to seek—"fresh interpretations of familiar thought". In many ways, hard to define, Miriam found herself "grown-up". Not for nothing, with that background of untraversed snow, does she—characteristically enough—burst out into a eulogy upon *soap*! With an almost Nietzchean detachment, in that high cold air, she watches her chance-given

companions; and here, in her re-bound from a chance-roused argument she articulates, crystallises, holds up in relief between the white snow and the cold sky, her "anti-man" conclusions. Directly opposite to Nietzsche's male-invalid attacks upon women are these austere matriarchal thoughts. Man's works of art—composed for the praise of other men and all about "meanings" in life and "purposes" of life, in place of Life Itself—are they the only things in existence that will be "immortal"? From those high snows, in her renewed defiance of the "philosophies" of men, came back to her, stronger than ever in that frozen silence, the old feminine battle-cry of her free soul. "It was as if all her life she had travelled towards this radiance and was now within it, clear of the past, at an ultimate destination."

## *Dorothy Richardson's Works*

The following is a list of Dorothy Richardson's works, which are all obtainable in England from Messrs. G. Duckworth & Co. (3 Henrietta Street, W.C.2) at the uniform price of 6s. each, and are published in America by Mr. Alfred Knopf:—

POINTED ROOFS, 1915
BACKWATER, 1916
HONEYCOMB, 1917
THE TUNNEL, 1918
INTERIM, 1919
DEADLOCK, 1921
REVOLVING LIGHTS, 1923
THE TRAP, 1925
OBERLAND, 1927

## *Towards the Country*

### *(A Fragment)*

ON Saturday evening riding out on a 'bus
To Hammersmith, I saw my once beloved
Driving his car back to the bright West End.
It is nearly three years now: a mutual friend
Gives me his news. Still our directions moved
In the old contrast: it was always thus.

No pain: the green and red of Kensington
Distract with beauty from the bitter past:
The known-impossible, yet sought embrace,
The hardly hoped for answer in that face—
By three years' absence all dismissed at last;
Desire, despair, even regret is gone.

And so to Hammersmith, and there a pause:
The theatre, a new venture for the Dance,
Revival of past greatness, and among
Old favourites the triumph of the young;
Tried fairies float, new satyrs leap and prance;
The house in old-time tumult of applause.

For one chief satyr we are all aflame,
But to our clapping he will not appear:
We clap still; Age and Honour take the call,
But he is honoured in the hearts of all,
Youth, that so sweetly dedicates the cheer
To dying echo of past beauty's fame—

Himself out of the echo building fresh
The murmur of a distant symphony,

One day to storm us with the trumpet's force:
And—for the fine in us is something coarse,
Idealism to idolatry
Too close allied—a pretty piece of flesh.

Legs white, close-fitted, sleeves of loose white lawn,
Black velvet jerkin as the spring of power,
White knot of silk that dances on the breast—
Or shoulder naked in a rag-rent vest—
Or human form transposed into a flower—
Or the trim doublet of the leprechaun.

Love I that courtier of the past, or this
Fictitious satyr? No, I am awake;
This sweet disturbance, it is for his sake,
Himself, each vision—or do I mistake
Playing with memory for a new heartache?
This was my feeling once: the same now is.

No, but I want, and therefore think it so:
This last reminder on the way from town,
My once beloved, he gave this fancy birth.
Yet I will foster it and watch its worth,
Bask in its smile, endure its stripling frown,
And if it leaves me lightly, let it go.

* * * * *

After the pause, from Hammersmith to bed,
Out in the country, by my window-sill,
The cool air welling from a liquid sky
And there the unobtrusive company,
The stars ready to answer if I will;
The fir-tree nodding me its silly head. . . .

ANON

H. L. SALMON

# *Lawrence and a "Sense of the Whole"*

AFTER a reading of some of Lawrence's philosophical work Mr. Waldo Frank's note on Lawrence in *The New Adelphi* (*June-August* 1930) leaves me dissatisfied. His last word on Lawrence seems to be, briefly, that he failed because he never really attained to a stable "sense of the whole":

> "He (Lawrence) had to seek extraordinary moments. The ultimate ecstasy of knowing the many things of the world as the common features of life's oneness was never his."

But, surely, a sense of the whole is no more fundamental than a rapt dwelling upon particulars. Only it happens with some people that no sooner are their eyes open than they are arrested by particulars which overflow with their own infinity and throb too much with their own mystery to allow their beholders to ascend, through abstraction, to any centre or vision of oneness. Others rush, immediately, inwards and upwards, with only a casual, uncomprehending glance at the many, to the pin-point, the centre, whence the vision of unity.

In some ages man's deepest need is concentration upon the One; in others, concentration upon the Many. There is no incompatibility between them, no need whatever, as philosophers have imagined, to reconcile them: they are simply supplementary, aspects of the same. Plato it was who focussed our attention upon the One. After piercing the innumerable shadows, Plato's Philosopher-King saw the heart of Reality, the Form of Good. With Plato, we rise through acquaintance with all the separate beauties (beautiful deeds and beautiful objects) to contemplation of the sublime Form of Beauty, whose glory they merely reflect.

But what have we done? We have tried to *dwell for ever* with the

Form, turning our backs upon the Particulars. And this has been our mistake. We have tried—as the history of philosophy since Plato pathetically shows—to take up our permanent abode with the Form, the One, and, to our bewilderment, have felt our life there growing more and more thin and barren. . . Until at last we reluctantly turn our eyes again to the particulars. The voicings of this turning have been many, but varying in detail only. The Pragmatists, represented by Dewey, have made their contribution; and Russell has reminded us that the very concept of the "Universe" (remembering the etymology of the word) is an unwarranted survival of pre-Copernican astronomy. But the most remarkable *artistic* expression of the turning is in Lawrence. The philosophers have *named* the change; but art, as Schiller said, is consecrated to Joy, and the joy of the change—which means one more bursting of the bonds, one more release from barrenness and stagnation, one more deliverance—sustains that wonderful final chapter of "The Crown".

So what Mr. Waldo Frank regards as Lawrence's limitation, I must consider the very source of his power. Lawrence did not want "a sense of the whole"; he fought against it, and left it behind. "We live in a multiple universe", he said. "I am a chick that absolutely refuses to chirp inside the monistic egg." He felt that our sense of the whole was so over-developed that it had grown stale.

> "Plato said that ahead, ahead was the perfect Idea. . . We have pretty well caught up with the perfect Idea, and we find it a sort of vast, white, polished tomb-stone."

Not a tombstone to Plato; Plato's inspiration was in the going ahead; but to us who have tried to dwell within the goal, and have found that "every goal is a grave, when you get there." In Plato, the reality behind the numerous unreal appearances was the Perfect Idea; in Kant, behind *the-thing-as-it-appears-to-be* is the

*thing-in-itself*, the noumenon at the back of the phenomenon. We have been running in small circles round this *Ding-an-Sich*, trying to characterise it once for all, to pluck forth its final secret. But it has no secret apart from the particulars, the appearances; and from these we have cut ourselves off.

> "Oh, if only we knew, the earth is everything and the sun is everything that we have missed knowing."

The glory of man, woman and sun are touching us, singeing our very garments, but we, with our eyes riveted on the ghost of the One, are insensible to them—we, the "myriad, myriad little egos, five billion feeding like one". We try to live on a sense of the whole—a permanent, acquired sense which shall remain with us daily; but such a sense is the equivalent of memory, and

> "Memory is not truth. Memory is persistence, perpetuation of a momentary cohesion in the flux. God is gone, until next time. But the next time will come. And then again we shall *see* God, and once more, it will be different. It is always different. . . . It is no good living on memory. When the flower opens, see him, don't remember him, when the sun shines, be him, and then cease again."

These are the "extraordinary moments" of which Mr. Waldo Frank speaks; but it was just with them that we so deeply needed to be re-acquainted. I do not believe that Lawrence was without experience of the One; only he realised that it is our attempt *to abide* with the One, the Eternal, which saps our life.

> "This is sin, this tying the knot in Time, this anchoring the ark of eternal truth upon the waters. . . This is evil, this desire for constancy, for fixity in the temporal world. This is the denial of the absolute good, the revocation of the Kingdom of Heaven."

The fact is that our allegiance must *necessarily* oscillate between

the One and the Many, the eternal and the temporal, and neither can have an exclusive claim upon us. In a crisis, the particulars drop away, and we are brought into the silence of the encircling reality. So we believe at the time. Then we know eternity, we are sure of the underlying reality, upholding us; we cannot understand how we came to forget or disown it. But we cannot dwell within it—permanently. As soon as we set up our abode there, the glory fades. The Many and the One, the Particulars and the Whole, shine by each other's light; the river of life runs continuously between them, connecting them, and we must advance with it, as it broadens out into eternity, and, without pause, breaks up again into the unnumbered streamlets. For us there can be no tarrying upon the banks of the eternal. Lawrence saw how, if we tried to tarry, the river would not flow but sink into the sand. We must move on, into the Unknown, and the river will rush into us from behind. . . .

In *St. Mawr*, Lou Witt sat in the garden, just musing. She looked at the poppies:

> "The mere colour of hard red . . . lingered in her consciousness like a communication."

What is the colour, red (hard or soft!) to those whose final ecstasy lies in the achievement of a sense of the whole?—a mere nothing; "a secondary quality" or an infinitely removed shadow of a shadow of reality. And yet, it reveals exactly as much of the Infinite Mystery as the loftiest vision of the One. Yes, it is shining with exactly the same revelation, as we shall know if we have cause to look at it.

JAMES PENNETHORNE

## *The Perfect Understanding*

WINIFRED was the perfect wife. Unassertive, she yet managed to force him, James thought, to do all the things which he ought or wanted to do, but felt it his intellectual duty to some obscure self to resist. She would coax him, either by clever antagonism, or persuasive caresses, to do what he wanted. She behaved admirably in public, in semi-private with a kind of pretty and amiable incompetence which everyone seemed to like, whilst alone with him she was compliant, yet provoking, in admirable proportions. Her appearance was suitable and attractive: her manners, if vague, were obviously correct in their quantity and instructed in their quality: her opinions were futile, but never obtruded without humour, and her friends were delightful. Altogether, she was perfectly satisfactory, and James hated her like hell.

James reflected very bitterly upon the cruelty of it all. He wallowed unhappily in the utter misery of having to live on, year after year, with this perfect woman. In being the only person who realised the essential coarseness of her hair, or that misalignment of one of her canine teeth which could be intriguing only to the perversity of calf-love. The despair and degradation, James thought, the overpowering humiliation, of having to share a bathroom with this perfect understanding; the inexpressible feebleness of having a better self always there to calm, or correct. The horror of being an understood husband. It was, of course, James told himself, just boredom. It was just disappointment at inertia having prevented the completion of that wonderfully creative existence which he had, with the help of John, planned out for himself at Oxford. And Winifred could hardly be called, really, a Step on the Downward Path. Indeed, she had, he had said for a

long time (with an amiable self-depreciation which could not, he felt, ever have deceived his real friends), done much to pull him together. During the honeymoon, he had written quite a lot of that novel. It was not altogether the novel he had planned before the beginning of the honeymoon, but even so that was hardly Winifred's fault. Still, she was utterly impossible for him: intellectually incompatible. Not that he ever wanted to talk to her intellectually, for indeed he had been attracted to her really as an escape from all that; besides, he had never tried it, and she might be clever, for all that he knew, though she had no conversation, and never opened a book. . . But she was quite impossible: clinging. "You know, I understand you perfectly, darling. I always know exactly what you are going to do." It might seem true, but by Jesting Pilate there were waters she couldn't swim in. Vitality vampire, cloying with kindness. God, for freedom!

James decided to kill her. The inner life and its conflict must be freed from the conflict of the outer life. He was in a way sorry for her: for the girl he had married. But he was convinced of the necessity of cutting out this awful ulcer on his mental existence, with its perpetual sympathy and universal comprehension. Poor Winifred! She had been so sweet once. But the intellectual athlete must not be sentimental about obstacles, and James sighed, determining even more certainly upon the necessity of her extinction. There would be the trouble of the funeral; the sympathy of her friends—their sorrow for him in what must seem like the loss of his own life. But a million times it would be worth it. "All her silken tresses rust, silent are her dove replies", he murmured, quoting De Tabley with anticipatory relish. Afterwards he would write the most marvellous book, and probably go to the south of France. He might even marry again, if he could find a woman who didn't understand him. He would escape from her friends, to whom he did not object, but who *did* hunt things far too much, all the same, and he would be clear of her: her woolly love, her

enveloping femininity, her. He smoked a lot of cigarettes, feeling rather self-consciously wicked, as he contemplated ways and means.

In the end, he decided upon a very simple method. Walking, the young couple would have come to a cliff, advanced too near to the edge, and Winifred—clever, delightful, pretty Winifred—would have fallen off. It would be a terrible tragedy. Everyone would feel that, in sorrow for the dead, all care should be taken not to forget the overpowering grief of the living husband. Easy, easy.

It was a lovely day, with the clouds going quickly overhead, far up above the downs. Together they stood, James and Winifred, looking down the edge of a considerable quarry.

"My dear," James said, carelessly, "come to the very edge and look down." "Don't fall off," he added, maliciously, "it would kill you to pieces." (They still used, occasionally, a form of fatuous baby talk.) He walked up close behind her, ready at any moment to give her the little push which would finish it all. He looked at her, and then down into the quarry. He could see exactly the pile of gravel on which she would pitch. He heard his cry of horror, saw himself running for help—alas, too late! He rehearsed to himself, fascinated, the path she would describe through the air, over and over. . . With a deep breath he braced himself for the little push which meant release.

At this point Winifred side-stepped neatly (she was an excellent dancer), jabbed him sharply in the back, and, with well directed leverage, tumbled him quite easily over the edge. He fell for what seemed some time, and crumpled up on his pile of gravel far below. Winifred smiled, and walked slowly away to fetch help.

It was silly, she thought. For she had understood him so utterly: his every inclination. Besides, as she explained to herself that night in bed, she had always *loathed* the man.

## *The Kite*

SLENDER are the strings of light
That keep the kittle stars in sight;
Many a bright and blistering sun
Has slid into oblivion
From listless hands that, letting go,
Fold in content to have it so;
Or black and sudden blasts have harried
Hands that clung and bled, and carried
Twine and all away, away
To what blear and bitter lands
Where no star is and no play
Of sunlight through uplifted hands.

ALISTER MACKENZIE

## "*This is my Body. . . .*"

BEAUTY is a dying,
Dead as it draws breath,
Fashioned from the flying
Chisel of chill death.

Beauty from a manger
Stepped up to a stake;
There a beauty stranger
Than a body brake.

Night's tremendous dying
Is a flower's fill of dew:
And the dew's gone, and the crying
Of the heart's beauty too.

"This is my body broken"—
O Death, artificer,
Make mute her beauty spoken,
But take those hands from her.

ALISTER MACKENZIE

# THE ADELPHI FORUM

## *God, Faith and Mr. Murry*

AS a child I had to learn texts from the Bible. Some were long but comprehensible; others were short but incomprehensible. I preferred the latter. One of these I remember cheerfully chanting to my mother: "Have faith in God." It was almost as good as "Jesus wept."

Forty years later the words have meaning for me, though in the same time they seem to have become meaningless to many people. I think they once had meaning for Mr. Murry. But "God" has disappeared in a process of disintoxication, and in last month's *Adelphi* "faith" received its quietus. Mr. Murry has no use either for "God" or "faith".

Mr. Murry wants "a new language." I am tempted to prophesy that no new language shall be given: the effort to construct it will fail. No poet of any magnitude has ever asked for a new language: enough for him to re-mint the old: enough for him to speak the old language with his own meaning. Keats did this. Blake did it. Jesus himself did it. The cry for a new language is idealism, or error. As a critic Mr. Murry will recognise it for the demand of the inventors, not the creators of literature. The inferior poet sweats his brain to invent a new language: the true poet breathes his spirit into the old. New languages belong to the builders of Babel.

'But the futility of speaking in terms that are completely misunderstood!'

When was that a deterrent to sincerity? It did not prevent Jesus from speaking in parables, Blake from writing the so-called prophetic books, Beethoven from composing the posthumous quartets, Epstein from carving "Genesis". Not one of them speaks a "new" language: they merely refashion the old. For the onus of understanding is not on the creator, who has enough to do to look after his own sincerity: his responsibility is to his own vision, and nothing else. For ever, the prophet speaks only for those who have "ears to hear". Gandhi says he believes in love. Does anyone misunderstand him? The fault is theirs.

For my part I will go straight back to the old language and—for the

sake of that very clarity Mr. Murry is looking for in the opposite direction—say that I think faith in God matters: that it is all important: that religion is not experienced apart from faith in God. And the immediate cause of this outburst is to be found in Mr. Murry's concluding essay on modern religion, *The Veil of Good and Evil.*

As for the word "God", I have long been indifferent about it. Like every other great word, it is meaningless apart from the meaning given to it by the spirit of the man who uses it. Orthodoxy has done its best to destroy it, for Orthodoxy is always the opaque gloss that puts the veil of indetermination over every true concept, profaning the sacred by lifting it out of the heart while it declares that its counterfeit in the head is the same thing; its business is to sterilise the truth, destroy the living seed, regiment the living mystery of a man and turn him into a death-dealing automaton, obedient to he knows not what. Orthodoxy is fond of the word "God" because it means at once nothing and everything to Orthodoxy and is useful, chiefly to kill the spontaneous promptings of life in every man. Best turn aside, I thought, from a word employed to such effect; for God as an intellectual formula is the very Devil.

And not only the word but the concept. If the idea of God is absurd, then laugh at it—but heartily. If God has become supererogatory, let him go. If he has become an incubus, best show him the door. If he stands for anthropomorphism, put him in a museum. If he is the symbol of fear, send him to Freud. If he is capable of rationalisation, let him be rationalised. If he is an historic myth, deliver him over to the archaic poets. But if God is a spirit which "only acts and is in existing beings or men", I suppose a spirit is worthy of its name. A sense of reality demands that we should have nomenclature for that which is. Even *The Freethinker* is entitled to be *called* "The Freethinker".

However, until recently, I thought it better not to speak of God: better to stick to experience and let experience determine the validity of all definitions, which, I may add, it has done. That seemed to have been the way of Mr. Murry: a rich and fruitful way, giving birth, in an age of intellectual conformity and spiritual bankruptcy, to restatements of the truth in its living intensity. He had made "the Heart the Mind's Bible"; he had written the authentic words, authenticated in their very structure, words that are living images of truth individually perceived, words like these concerning angels:

> "Thus, small and living children have their angels who live with their Father and do not leave him, while they are children. We may guess that, when their angels do leave him, the children have become prodigal sons, and that when they return, their angels also return . . . We catch a glimpse of the reason why they rejoice over the sinner whose heart is changed: he is a brother-angel, come back again. When he was tiny, his angel was there, basking in the love of God; then his angel disappeared, but his place was kept, and his dear face remembered; suddenly, he came back again, and his brothers cried for joy. There he was, in his old place, full in the light of God's eyes;"

or these concerning Jesus at his baptism:

> "There was suddenness, happiness, peace and joy—peace and joy not his own, yet not of another than himself, in something that he was, and was not."

The living truth is in these words; yet they are meaningless to those for whom the experience is fabulous. They are words of a very old language, susceptible of endless misunderstanding, yet words that show the essential experience of the pure in heart when they see God.

But then, ironically, *God* came, testifying to the fact that Mr. Murry was no longer content with the *experience* of God, showing that God must bow to intellectual formula or be cast as rubbish on the myth-heap, declaring that he must be conceived of as organic, incorporated as a naturalised citizen of the "Universe"—a metaphysical word with which Mr. Murry has drawn a circle round himself to shut away the unruly winds that blow in from Infinity. *God* came—to attend his own funeral; and the bright hues of religion faded from Mr. Murry's banner into the grey tones of pure philosophic truth. The fire died down, the light faded, and Mr. Murry set to work to rake over the ashes. They were the ashes of a real fire.

I wait for the spark to quicken. Every self-made path is a spiral, and he who cuts the track up a mountain makes a devious course. Even the eye of the visionary is mortal and will close in hours of sleep. Bunyan's Christian will meet Mr. Worldly Wiseman: he will turn aside into By-Path Meadow: he will even enter the castle of Giant Despair. It is all in the journey.

And now faith gets the quietus already given to God. (Faithful,

you may remember, was burnt in the City of Vanity Fair about half way on the journey to the Celestial City.) Mr. Murry says that "at no point in the whole development of the imaginative spark can Faith possibly enter in."

This leaves me wondering what had happened to his own imaginative spark when he founded *The Adelphi* upon his own faith in God. And I suppose he means precisely what he says—Mr. Murry usually does—though he explains that he uses the word "in the simple and ordinary sense of the will-to-believe." But the "will-to-believe" seems to me to imply a contradiction in terms, for what has "will" to do with "belief"? "The assurance of things hoped for" makes no demand on the will, and I feel confident that I am not peculiar in asserting that faith has nothing whatever to do with the will-to-believe—that it is in fact its contrary, being the suspension of volition such as the iron makes in the presence of the magnet. Faith I would define as the whole-hearted acceptance of apprehended truth.

Anyway, with God and faith demolished, it behoves one reader of *The Adelphi* at least to dig about his foundations; for I think I have faith, and I have preached imagination in these columns.

Mr. Murry now says: "Faith and imagination are mutually destructive". Are they? Was Jesus a man of imagination? And had he any faith? Was our mutual friend Blake? And had he? He it was who said, "Many are not capable of a firm persuasion of anything." He also said the last word about faith—or rather, about the want of it:

> "If the sun and moon should doubt
> They'd immediately go out."

Mr. Murry is fond of the story of the Prodigal Son. When the prodigal reached the depths of desolation, the first thing he realised was his own degradation. This prompted his imagination to the second thing he realised, which was his father's house. The third thing he realised was faith in the loving-kindness of his father. In the strength of that faith, and in nothing else, he made the act of faith: "I will arise and go to my father."

Now according to Mr. Murry this proves half a dozen things. First, that the prodigal had no imagination, since he had faith. Second, that he was insane, since the way of "sanity" is to "just go on beating your head against the wall until you haven't the strength to do it any more."

Third, that he was an angel, since devils embrace desolation as a mistress. Fourth, that he had not "the will to submit to experience." Fifth, that he was guilty of "a bad joke." And lastly, that he never achieved real integration, because he retained a very clear knowledge of Good and Evil ("Father, I have sinned") and declined to identify himself with that part of the universe which was the province of the swine.

Let us consider an alternative which was open to the Prodigal Son when he reached the depths of desolation. He could have said to himself: 'That which causes me this unrest, and gives me this overwhelming sense of despair is really nothing more than the atavistic wish to return to the condition of childhood; I want to go back to my father because I am afraid to "submit to experience". However, I am a man, determined to achieve my own integrity: "that by which we are divided from the universe, and separated from ourselves which belong to the universe, is the Knowledge of Good and Evil". "This knowledge is illusion": a "veil of error". Let me embrace "the universe in its simple truth, as it is seen by the vision which is freed from the taint of belief, or anxiety, or desire," so shall I see "*Omnis existentia est perfectio*" and love my life among these swine as truly as I loved life in my father's house. That which I thought was imagination—which conjured the image of joyous life in my father's house and prompted my heart to feel his love—was in reality a mirage of Good and Evil created by the fatal "will-to-believe", whereas "imagination, if it can be described as a will at all, is the will to submit to experience. Ultimately, I suppose it is just an instinct, a simple being thus and not otherwise in the total organism". This instinct is just what brought me here. True to this instinct, here I will stay. I am that I am. The idea of escaping from desolation sprang from pure cowardice. I must "just go on beating my head against the wall"; for if I do this, though life will remain "meaningless", that by which I am united to the universe will triumph over that by which I am divided from it: both beauty and ugliness will dissolve away, and my vision will be of "the universe in its simple truth". "Consciousness is the strange power . . . to become a Prodigal Son." To be this is my destiny. I accept it. I am not responsible. I am simply a natural organism. My discrimination between the condition of sonship and the condition of swineherd was illusion: I am a son so long as I cease from discrimination. "To know Good and Evil is to cease from Sonship: for this knowledge is illusion. There is

no Good and Evil to know." I myself have created the world of Good and Evil: let me cease from this creation and I shall be as free from Good and Evil as these swine. Let me resume the undifferentiated. The only real value is the value of the existent universe in its totality; and this is constant, static, unalterable. What is, is. Acceptance is the way of salvation. Father, be blowed! I make the complete acceptance of my destiny, and in so doing prove my integration as a re-born son.'

Such an application of Mr. Murry's teaching shows, I hope, that an alternative is open to man at every crisis. The battle between Free Will and Determinism will last as long as existence, and Mr. Murry, I think, does himself violence to take sides when he speaks of those things which pertain to the realm of existence. There is a *below* Good and Evil—a mindless world of unconscious existence which man shares, in measure, with the other animals. In moments of desolation this world opens to us, inviting us to cease from responsibility, to place the responsibility for our lot upon the inscrutable workings of a mindless universe, and by identifying ourselves with this irrational unknown to share the peace of unconscious existence which is the portion of the beasts. This we can attempt; and the end of that attempt is death, total and irreparable spiritual death.

But at the same time as this gulf yawns, another world opens. There is a *beyond* Good and Evil which is to be attained only by knowledge and love of the will of God. And the important thing to note about this world and the world of unconsciousness is that they are not the same, though they be as like as the worlds of Innocence and Imagination. They are divided by the entire world of human experience, a very real world, of very real Good and Evil, known by man through the "strange power" of consciousness. And man, having once attained to consciousness can never go back. Eden is closed for ever. The angel with the flaming two-edged sword of Good and Evil guards the gate and is himself a portent that Eden has become a City of Destruction and man's only home is the City of God, where the Tree of Life is again to be found.

Now consciousness is the power by which, as Mr. Murry truly says, man knows himself a Prodigal Son; but—and here is the important point—it is also the power by which imagination is born in him. To describe imagination as "just an instinct" is to be woefully ignorant either of imagination or of instinct. Blake has rightly described im-

agination as "spiritual sensation", and this imagination is, in measure, the portion of every single human being who has come to consciousness. And imagination, which every man has the free power to exercise, will, if exercised, beget in him the desire to be no longer a prodigal son but a true son of God. But so far from attaining to beatitude without "taint of belief, or anxiety, or desire", I am inclined to believe that unless a man suffers agony at the discovery of his own impotence, unless he has belief in a power greater than his own and desire for union with that power, he can never be anything but a prodigal son. It is through his desire to be at one with the father that he is able to annihilate his own selfhood and become at one with him. Only by the exercise of consciousness can he make that imaginative act: only by consciousness of the not-self can he be rid of his selfhood. There must be a total and distinct realisation of the natures of the lion and the lamb, and the creation of a complete imaginative being in both of them, before they can lie down together. There must be absolute recognition of the existence of Heaven and Hell before there can be a Marriage of Heaven and Hell. There must be a deep consciousness of the reality of the world of Good and Evil before imagination can beget the conception of a world of Being in which the world of Good and Evil, which is the natural world of Existence, is surpassed.

I am aware that in reiterating these seemingly simple truths I have baulked the whole issue in the minds of those to whom the words "God" and "faith" are meaningless. Let me therefore attempt to define as simply as I can, and by recourse to the only criterion I believe to be valid—individual experience—what I mean by "a beyond Good and Evil which is to be attained only by knowledge and love of the will of God".

When a man has striven ineffectually to beat back the waves of pain that are quenching the life of one he loves as his own soul—when he realises that his utmost effort is quite useless—then, in that moment of heart-broken despair, if his love is absolute, a door will open. And through that door he will recognise—beyond his reach, beyond his power to touch or change—the eternal individuality, the unique essential being of the one he loves. He will know that it is this being who has compelled his love, and he will realise in a flash of insight that this being is not the sport of time and circumstance but is "the Immortal Man that cannot die". He will know what Meredith knew when he

wrote:

> "With Life and Death I walked when Love appeared
> And made them on each side a shadow seem."

And in that moment, such joy, such gladness of heart will possess him that he will pass into the realm of Being and know the realm of Existence as a shadow of the spiritual world. He will see God, and he will know that God is Love: he will know that the power which projected this essential beauty into the world of existence is the same power as that which impels the human artist to body forth in perishing materials visions of order and beauty more real to consciousness than their corporeal shadows in the world of fact. Then, if he meditates, he will realise that what establishes an eternal and unbreakable connection between the identity which is himself and the identity of another is a love truly impersonal and disinterested—a love of the thing in itself—a love that asks nothing, either for itself or even for its object—a love that rests in being, and is content. And at that moment he will know the secret of life itself: how that all life springs from this selfless love, and is wholly sustained, from birth to death, by this selfsame power. And he will see this power as distinctly existing apart from himself, having laws of its own, which he can obey or disobey, but which lovingly to obey is joy and peace and life itself, and which to forget or to disobey is misery and confusion and self-destruction. Thenceforth his whole life will be oriented by the desire to be a medium of this power, and I believe that in the measure in which he can do this he will know God and be expressive of the will of God—of that God whose will is our peace.

And that, very crudely expressed, is where I stand, and why I believe that faith in God is important. I desire to live by faith in that which I know: I desire to know that in which I have faith. I am without self-confidence, in the God that I know I have perfect faith. His being perpetually enters and redeems my world of existence.

MAX PLOWMAN

# REVIEWS

## *A Prospective Religion*

THE PROSPECTS OF HUMANISM. *By Lawrence Hyde* (Gerald Howe) *10s. 6d.*

THIS book is an indirect plea for a modern religion and a new order of priests. Mr. Hyde recognises that modern intellectuals have come, or are coming, to the end of themselves, and will have to look beyond themselves if they are to continue to live. He does not say so, but he means that they will have to look to the Divine Man in them, to the Lord of Life, to God. And then their work as intellectuals will not centre around Art as such or Literature as such, but around Religion. They will be priests.

The loyalty of such a priest will not be to any sect, creed, or church; nor to any new intellectual formulation of religion. His loyalty will be to the Lord. And he will know the Lord through his religious experience. Then afterwards, in so far as he is loyal, he will live to do the Lord's work, not his own. The form of that work will vary with his circumstance and talent, but the function of that work for each and every priest will be the same: he will be at once creator and fighter, healer and lover.

Mr. Hyde would like to see a race of such priests functioning in the modern community as living centres of outflowing life: and he would like to be one of them himself. But at present he is timid of the knowledge and responsibility it would involve; and he is afraid of the brutality of the impacts he would have to suffer. So throughout this book he takes refuge in complexities of thought which are confusing and misleading to himself and to any who want to see as a living reality that which in his heart he wants too.

He says that his primary concern is to "show that in the end the purely humanistic attitude to the world breaks down, and that in so breaking down points beyond itself to the superior validity of the religious experience." And with this purpose in view he steers a straight critical course through humanism, naturalism, classicism, romanticism and innumerable other intellectualisms to the transcendentalism he approves of. But all the time he is perverse and indefinite about the

very experience which is the crux of religion and the essential credential *of every priest.*

It is through religious experience that a man knows the Lord; and then he knows Him in his spirit, feels Him in his body, and acknowledges Him in his mind. Whenever one of these realisations is missing it is not the Lord he knows, and he cannot truly serve Him. Mr. Hyde is timid of such simple knowledge. He is willing to feel the Lord in his spirit, and wants to know Him in his mind, but will not acknowledge Him in his flesh. The result is that throughout his book he is in unprofitable conflict with those who are willing to feel the Lord in the body but are loath to acknowledge in their minds that He is indeed the Lord. He is using a devil of one sort to cast out a devil of another. In consequence he misses his man altogether.

Take as an example his attack on Mr. Murry. During the last years Mr. Murry has laid himself open to every manner of calumny and misunderstanding by writing of the feelings nearest his heart. At the same time he has misled many (and sometimes lost himself) in a maze of self-hypnotic intellectualism by which he would explain his experience. Now Mr. Hyde comes along and completely ignores everything sincere and personal to Mr. Murry, and attacks his philosophy (which surely no one else but Mr. Hyde has ever discovered) as representative of a school of thought. It is a futile procedure, for while all his criticism of Mr. Murry is quite justified (as would be all Mr. Murry's criticism of him), he is really wasting his effort in conflict with his own image, and fails to perceive the growing point in Mr. Murry that is beyond him.

Possibly it is half Mr. Murry's fault for having talked so much about *the* religious experience. All experience is religious: it merely varies in intensity and value. But Mr. Hyde abstracts experience from the person and his context of circumstance, and is then free to take flight into philosophic complexities. Yet the fact remains that Mr. Murry's work has made it quite clear that his religious experience was the pinnacle of a sequence of human (and very human) experiences which were inseparable from his peculiar personality and his personal relationships. It is always so. The so-called religious experience is but the highest human experience, and needs every other human experience for its existence. Once this is acknowledged, then it can be given its supreme place as the clue to human life, and becomes essentially simple. It is the

experience of a man when he forgives and is forgiven, when he loves and is loved.

Mr. Hyde's religion is not human: it is mental. "As life advances", he says, "the spiritual essence slowly acquires the greater reality and remains present to the mind whether it is actually before our eyes or not". That may be all very well for a *mind*, but for a man it is a poor consolation. He says that "a man is not truly mature while he still only apprehends truth and beauty at the cost of being conditioned by the objects in which they are manifested". In that he is confused between maturity and death. He suggests "the exercise of a certain type of spiritual discipline which makes, not for responsiveness to life, but for that inner serenity enjoyed by the saint". But if a saint is to be sane, then his saintliness is measured by his capacity for love and for giving it; and the only serenity worth while is not one which is artificially invoked by the deliberate exercise of a spiritual discipline, but one which is earned by suffering a full responsiveness to the natural demands and relationships of life.

For some reason Mr. Hyde is afraid of something, and is therefore standing in his own way. He doesn't want to experience any more: he wants to be at the end of it, forgetting that the grave is the only end. In the meantime he wants to reintroduce deism into modern thought; and it is true that if one must have a word for Power, then perhaps God is the best one can have. But that is only so long as it is an emotional utterance. The moment it is a thought, then God is dead and must be born again, and, who knows, perhaps next time He will have no name at all. The Lord created the world and all that is in it; and deep within His world He has remained ever since. Any man who would abstract Him again as a mental image or a spiritual essence is a renegade to religion, not a priest. A priest is a man in the world, not a transcendental entity. As a man Mr. Hyde is unconvincing. As a plea for religion, therefore, his book is a failure. It intrigues the mind, but the body it ignores. It must be admitted it is only the second volume of a trilogy: the third may have all this one lacks.

G. B. EDWARDS

# *Creative Detachment*

THE SONG OF LIFE. *By Krishnamurti* (Star Publishing Trust) *2s. and 5s.*

HUMANITY, it has been well said, may be divided into two classes: those who divide humanity into two classes, and those who don't. Krishnamurti is certainly of those who make no arbitrary classifications. He is an utterly courageous and consistent monist. Nevertheless, for the purpose of discussing his book, it may be useful to postulate two distinct types of writer: the prophet and the artist. The prophet is a man who meets us in our wanderings and urges us—by persuasion, by force, in whatever language may occur to him, in honied accents or with round oaths—to find the true path. The poet, or artist, is concerned to re-create his sense of bliss or of doom by expressing it, and so to put it on record for ever. If we will suffer his melodies, we shall partake in some degree of his experience; but the "pure" poet, I suppose—if such a being could exist—would not be concerned about his readers at all. His poetry would be for its own sake. In fact, of course, there are no pure artists. Every artist is to some extent a prophet, however unconsciously, just as every prophet is to some extent an artist.

*The Song of Life* may perhaps be described as a book of mystical poetry, yet in his short and beautifully unself-conscious Foreword Krishnamurti makes it clear that he is at heart a prophet. "The attainment of Truth," he writes, "is an absolute, final experience. I have re-created myself after Truth. I am not a poet; I have merely attempted to put into words the manner of my realisation." If the reader is alienated by these uncompromising accents, he will probably ignore Krishnamurti's disclaimer and persist in judging the thirty-three short poems which follow as literature pure and simple. He will find in them some graceful cadences and a smoothness and limpidity, which can sometimes degenerate into flat monotony. He will compare them, perhaps, with T. S. Eliot's *Ash Wednesday* and, finding they lack the verbal felicities and formal perfection of that lovely poem, will feel absolved from trying to master their philosophic content.

But if we take Krishnamurti's plain statement seriously and accept him as a prophet with a message which can be understood, we shall read his poems not as the attempts of an artist to create self-contained

objects of beauty, but as the vague and imperfect fragments of a vision which he possesses and to which he is concerned to lead us—a vision which he could never communicate in words and which can only be won by individual effort.

> "Life has no pleasure, no pain,
> Nor the corruption of pursuing love.
> Life is neither good nor evil,
> Nor the dark punishment of careless sin.
> Life gives no comfort,
> Nor does it rest in the shrine of oblivion.
> Life is neither spirit nor matter,
> Nor is there the cruel division of action and inaction.
> Life has no death,
> Nor has it the void of loneliness in the shadow of Time.
> Free is the man who lives in the Eternal,
> For Life is."

A superficial judgment might dismiss those lines as an example of colourless Oriental quietism, yet the strenuous Western European, St. John of the Cross, whom Huysmans has described "au bout de la route, terrible et sanglant," wrote these words, which are certainly not more positive:

> "If you would know the taste of the Whole,
> Seek no taste in anything.
> If you would come to know the Whole,
> Seek to know nothing of anything.
> If you would possess the Whole,
> Seek to possess nothing of anything.
> If you would become the Whole,
> Seek to be nothing of anything."

"Love not the shapely branch," writes Krishnamurti, "nor place its image alone in thy heart. It dieth away. Love the whole tree." And again: "Seek not the perfume of a single heart nor dwell in its easeful comfort: For therein abides the fear of loneliness . . . .The worship of many in the one leads to sorrow. But the love of the one in the many

is everlasting bliss." Overcome the fear of loneliness which springs from the illusion of the personal; die to yourself and you will be reborn to everlasting life. This has been the message of Wisdom all down the ages. It was recently expounded in these pages by Mr. Murry, and every man knows it in his heart for truth. Such truth, however, is always paradoxical and absurd to the intellect. We have to grow into it, and cannot grasp it with our minds alone. St. John of the Cross wrote to a nun that he wished to see in her "a great starkness of spirit (desnudez de espiritu) and such detachment from all that is creaturely (tan sin arrimo de criaturas) that all Hell would not suffice to distress her." The unimaginative might suppose that he wished her to become inhumanly callous; and the same kind of misinterpretation will probably be Krishnamurti's fate when he says that he is "as the sea that receiveth the clean and the impure rivers and heedeth not." Anyway, readers will know after a very few pages of *The Song of Life* whether or not the poems mean anything to them; and the reader to whom they are significant will find that, whatever their merits or demerits as poems, they provide themes for meditation which are not exhausted, but grow richer, as the capacity brought to them increases.

RICHARD REES

# *The Genius of Russia*

RUSSIA: A SOCIAL HISTORY. *By D. S. Mirsky* (Cresset Press) 25*s*.

IN his preface to this book, Prince Mirsky apologises to the reader for the absence from it of a single point of view on Russia's history. He says, "This serious shortcoming is due to the fact that in the course, and under the direct action, of my work, my own historical conception underwent an adjustment, which, at first imperceptible to myself, only crystallised after it was completed. If I were now to re-write it, it would be more strictly consonant with the concept of historical materialism, and economic facts would have been more consistently emphasised as the one and only protophenomenon of all historical reality." Those of us to whom history is the final revelation of the poetic soul of a people struggling with economic facts and striving to express themselves despite them, may be grateful to the fate that pre-

vented Prince Mirsky from writing his history according to the theory of "historical materialism." For he has given us something far higher and better: the first thoroughly Russian interpretation of Russian history written in the English language, and a book that is fascinating to study for the perspectives that it discloses. Anyone who reads this book with an open mind, without passing judgment on what is assumed to be "Russian backwardness and barbarism" from the standpoint of the hygienic and other sentimentalities taught him in the public schools, must see in Russian history the elements of a great tragedy on the Greek, or Shakespearian model. And to have lived such a tragedy is the peculiar privilege and the sign-manual of the genius of an extraordinary people. It has been inevitable, owing to the original nature of the Russian people themselves, as well as their geographical position. As Prince Mirsky has pointed out, the original Slavonic substratum of the people was not a single race, but a group of peoples who happened to be using the same language. Their geographical position left the land open to external cultural influences. Thus, at the outset, the Scythian Asiatic steppe-nomad influence was predominant, in one form or another. Through these steppe-nomads, Huns, Bulgars, Turks, Avars, the art-products of Sassanian Persian art and the products of Mongolia met and mingled on Russian soil. Then in the ninth century the Norsemen came in via the Baltic and established themselves at Kiev, penetrating thence as far as Constantinople. As Prince Mirsky says, they awakened the Slavonic population but did not alter it. The Tartar invasion from the East followed, leading in the fifteenth century to that extraordinary fusion of Eastern social and cultural life and Western consciousness that we call Muscovite civilisation. In 1689 Peter the Great gave the country a fresh push to the West, a push that reached its maximum for a few years after Napoleon's downfall. A fresh retreat to the East followed which reached its maximum, and then collapsed in the Great War. Now the Bolsheviks are trying to combine Western technical development and the theories of the most advanced European school of economists in a structure that rests profoundly upon the basis of a purely mystical, non-material and Oriental sense of nationality.

What is the meaning of this strange panorama of events, of this paradoxical people that possess in themselves at one and the same time all the external practical adaptability to circumstance of the West and

all the profound changelessness of the Oriental? How are we to judge those tortured, enigmatic, cruel, yet noble figures: Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, Alexander I, Lenin, that flash out for a moment from this story? Certainly not from the basis of our usual Western preconceptions which go no further than the parish pump and the church social. These people have in them something superhuman, and the greatest of them have been supermen. But their super-humanity is of a strange sort. Just as what started them on their long course athwart all history was not a race-group but a language-group, so what has continued them in it is, as Dostoievsky said, an omni-human power. Spiritually and culturally, they are supreme artists. If anyone doubts this, let him look at the plates in Prince Mirsky's book. These ikons, "tent" towers, monastery groups with hives of bulbous domes, peasant fabrics, are the work of a people always able to combine the most daring originality of imagination with the utmost intellectual awareness of what is being done elsewhere in the world. But politically they are nil, perhaps just because they are such supreme artists. The political history of England, the exact opposite to Russia, is a long and fascinating development from within, entailing endless adjustments and compromises, and resulting ultimately in the attainment of a democratic conception of the rôle of the ordinary man. The political history of Russia is a series of violent and catastrophic changes forced on the people from without; but underneath the genius of the people remains the same, not democratic, not ordinary, but world-overcoming and in every way extraordinary.

Although Prince Mirsky does not say so, I fancy he thinks that it will be the same story under the Bolsheviks. Despite his desire to write history on the basis of strict economic theory, he has seen so clearly the great trees in the Russian wood of the past, that I do not believe he thinks in his heart of hearts that, however many trees have to be hewed down, and others cultivated, the great wood can really grow in any other way than it has. At the present moment the Russian people has outwardly assumed the new guise of Western machine-driven civilisation in its most intense form as manifested in America, and has cast off as outworn superstition all its own past as well as the traditional past of Western Europe. I believe, and I think that Prince Mirsky also believes, that what they will achieve is a complete spiritualisation of the new forms of life they have borrowed. Anyone who has seen any of

the Bolshevik films will be convinced that this is indeed the case. All Western outer and inner forms, whether they be skyscrapers or tractors, or ideologies, will reappear in the Russian soul transformed, made absolutely spiritual, once and for all. For it is not too much to say that this people, so melancholy and so gay, so will-less from the point of view of the middle-class rational individual, and so immensely willed from the point of view of the whole of humanity, are, literally speaking, the most spiritual people in the world. And their spiritual symbol is that of the man who operates on an Eastern consciousness with a Western cast of mind. JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

## *Shorter Notices*

THE FOUNDATIONS OF SOVEREIGNTY AND OTHER ESSAYS. *By Harold J. Laski* (Allen & Unwin) 10*s*. 6*d*.

Mr. Laski is more concerned with the adaptation of inherited statecraft to the needs of modern life than with the presentation of a "pure" philosophy of state. For this reason, his book teems with reference, particularly legal reference. It is "a plea that realism be substituted in the place of fiction", and no source of valuable information is left untouched in his effort to show where and how our political theories falsify the conditions which should generate them. Legal, yet passionate and human to the lay thinker, the essays are a philosophical refresher to the legal mind.

Is there any truth in the classic conception of a Sovereign State—"absolute, omnipotent, uncontrollable"? Every writer on political theory to-day will agree that there is not. But shall we tolerate the fiction? While others pass the irrationality by as unimportant, Mr. Laski will have the fiction "till dead" in dock. He will have its antecedents traced from medieval theory, "when it was the main effort to find the essence of that secret whereby the oneness of humanity in God might be made manifest", through the personal conception of Sovereignty, particularly the theory of Divine Right of James, through to the modern theory of a Sovereign State which by rule of law creates rights for individual and corporation which were otherwise non-existent.

The irrationality of this claim calls into play all the passionate

analysis of which Mr. Laski is capable. How does this fiction stand in relation to the true purpose of government? The purpose of government is the preservation of individuality. "Liberty is nothing if not the protection of initiative which must be continuous if it is to be vital". Yet the classic conception of the State has stood in the way of rival corporate rights; liberty is curtailed in local administration and in corporate bodies such as Trade Unions, and no personality at all is admitted to associations not constituted by Act of Parliament; again, "liberty is derived from the existence of avenues of creative activity for the mass of citizens". Yet the fullness of realisation to most men is denied. Does the coercion of a figmentary sovereignty, unreal yet honoured, provide the element whereby direction and innovation are denied? Many will find it impossible to draw any other deduction from the unparalleled array of facts (or disarray, for they are not well ordered) that Mr. Laski has foregathered. We have made a cult of sovereignty and thereby lost the children of liberty, which are individuality and creativeness. When we destroy the cult, what do we see as our immediate need?

"What the orthodox theory of sovereignty has done is to coerce the parts into an unity and thereby to place itself at the disposal of the social group which, at any given historic moment, happens to dominate the life of the state. . . We have suffered from political inertia because the reaction of economic upon political structure is so profound. We have suffered from economic discontent because the structure of industry does not provide an adequate expression for the impulses of men. . . We need to federalise the organisation of England simply in order to give play to the mass of creative opinion which remains to-day untouched by political forces. It is here urged that the secret of its revivification is to associate in the exercise of powers those who have thus far been too merely its subjects." L. STANLEY

THE GAME OF THE SEASON. *By Hugh de Sélincourt* (Chapman & Hall) 5*s*.

How much "games" do you need? The question is an occupational test. If occupation is onerous (and the most onerous is unemployment) then one needs plenty of recreation: if occupation is congenial it is itself recreative. So the fact that we seem to need more and more re-creation, until our recreations assume the importance of national industries, is not a very healthful sign.

To the individual whose activities are at once expressive, productive, and yet sufficiently changeful to be recreative, games are likely to be a penance; indeed to any man whose sense of reality is strong, games are really anomalous, because pretence is an essential element of a game and reality is so engrossing and so diverse to a full-grown man that he has no craving for pretence: if he plays a game it is a willed indulgence. People like Shakespeare and Beethoven "played" with the substance of life, thus resolving the duality of work and play. Strictly speaking, all games are childish; for the child, lacking consciousness (which is the talisman of reality) has need to create its own fanciful world, making that fanciful world an image of the world of reality which consciousness, if healthy, will bring with the years.

That most of us are a bit childish goes without saying; but Gauvinier, the 'guv'nor' in Mr. de Sélincourt's cricket stories, is obsessed by the game, "mad" as he says, and Mr. de Sélincourt does not seem to be able to make up his mind whether his idol's madness is desirable or not. That it enables him to play cricket with frantic keenness and a frenzy of excitement is clear; for the winning (in fiction the village of Tillingfold always wins) of a village cricket-match with Gauvinier as "skipper" assumes the importance of a trial scene before the Great White Throne; the winners enjoy the raptures of Heaven, the losers suffer the pangs of Hell. That the villagers of Tillingfold—good, slow Sussexers—appreciated the feverish personal anxiety which possessed Gauvinier is rather difficult to believe; but perhaps the very poverty of the village life, on which he insists, made desirable such a sharp antidote; perhaps the religion of their daily life was so poor that it had to find expression in cricket played obsessionally. Even so, cricket as a "wish-dream" must be a terrible game.

Life is full of compensations, and one of the compensations for being interested in cricket as if it were an actual matter of life and death is that you write about it well. Mr. de Sélincourt does that. As Sir James Barrie (author of *Peter Pan: The Boy who Never Grew Up*) has said, Mr. de Sélincourt's earlier book, *The Cricket Match*, "is the best book about cricket or any other game that has ever been written", and these five tales of other games, real and imaginary, though less rounded and a little marred by tricks of the news-reporter, are almost as good. At the age of fifteen, how happy one would have been to read "How our Village beat the Australians"! And what a revelation of "fixed" in-

terest it betrays in a reviewer, like the present one, who can be excited by it now!

RICHARD FANSHAWE

THE WRITINGS OF ALFRED EDGAR COPPARD: *A Bibliography by Jacob Schwartz with foreword and notes by A. E. Coppard.* (Ulysses Bookshop, 20 Bury Street, W.C.1. 650 copies.) 21*s.*

As a bibliography this volume is first-rate. The descriptions of the books are set out clearly, fully, and—where we have tested them—accurately. Even details of periodical publication are supplied, and there are lists of unreprinted stories and articles. Collectors will need no further recommendation, but the attention of the less specialised reader deserves to be directed to the intimate, if haphazard and informal, autobiographical matter supplied by Mr. Coppard himself. His notes are not only revealing. They have a personal, a characteristic charm which recalls, though it does not imitate, the somewhat similar notes with which Mr. Arthur Machen some years ago annotated a bibliography of his works. Some of the stories are almost irresistibly quotable, but lack of space forbids.

THE COLONEL'S DAUGHTER: A Novel. *By Richard Aldington* (Chatto & Windus) 7*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Aldington's novel is the best thing he has done, opening to a surprising degree upon vistas to which I for one did not believe he had access. It is the novel of a satirist, but—what is much more important—of a novelist also, and the latter triumphs over the former even in his most Hamletesque despondency concerning the present state of post-war England. His picture of life in an English village, populated by characters all but uniformly unpleasant, is not finally true, nevertheless it has a truth, it is not merely malicious. Nor is it merely witty; there is in Mr. Aldington's pages a note of true comic invention which assents to, even while it mocks at, life, and for his heroine at least, to whom everything seems about to happen, he has felt a real and moving pity. The book will be read, and rightly, for its humour; it will be remembered for its deeper qualities. (The Epilogue which closes it is as unnecessary as Shaw's Epilogue to *St. Joan*, and yet in its own way as curiously effective; it is a return to the old Aldington at a moment when one would prefer to salute the new without distraction.)

G. W.

FATHER. *By the author of "Elizabeth and her German Garden"* (Macmillan) *7s. 6d.*

*Father*, whose authoress is justly renowned for her witty portrayal of human foibles, is a lazy book, suitable for convalescents and travellers, or for reading aloud, provided that the reader is an adept skipper. Skipping is necessary, because of passages where "Elizabeth" labours her slight material, spreads it out thin, and descends to dullness. This is a serious fault in a book designed simply to amuse and only retrieved from triviality by the grimness inherent in its initial situation. This situation, of a very young girl having married a mere acquaintance, aged sixty-five, without loving him, is thrown at us carelessly, with hardly an attempt to make it credible: it is necessary to the plot, and the disparity of age has a fascination for "Elizabeth." She uses it again in this very book when Jen, "Father's" daughter, escapes from him upon his remarriage, a young parson falls in love with her, and *he* has been a lifelong slave to a sister fifteen years his senior. Jen, not Father, is the central person of the book, but there is enough of the egotistical and unpleasantly amorous old man to remind the reader of that very remarkable novel *Vera*, in which the situation here skirted is expounded with wit but with so much more than wit. Remembering what "Elizabeth" *can* do makes one the more dissatisfied with this exploitation of her lesser gifts. E. B. C. J.

THE GOOD EARTH. *By Pearl S. Buck* (Methuen) *7s. 6d.*

This is a very exceptional book. It starts uncertainly, and it is handicapped by a bad style, rather like the style of Lang's crib to the Odyssey. But one scarcely worries about this, the story goes so straight to the very heart of truth. There is no plot, and yet not a single redundant incident; no words spent in pity, but a fidelity to life which simply withers optimism. The account of the life of rickshaw coolies in an eastern city is particularly moving. Anyone who has seen that vile sight of men running between shafts like horses, will welcome this description. The author evidently knows China as her native land, but has been away from it just long enough to notice the things which a Chinaman would miss. *The Good Earth* can be added at once to the very small list of first-rate books about the East.

It is the story of Wang Lung, a Chinese peasant. Born into crushing poverty, he digs his field with a wooden hoe, drinks hot water, because

tea is too expensive, eats meat only on feast days. He is the very type of the oriental, narrowly dutiful, abysmally ignorant, brutishly industrious. He has the hunger for land which outlives all other passions and turns everything else—every vice and every altruism—into nonsense. He loves land as some men love beauty. All his wisdom is summed up in this, that to own land is good, to sell land the ultimate folly. He is a peasant.

Perhaps the best-done thing in the book is the story of Wang Lung's relations with his wife, O Lan. O Lan is a slave girl, chosen for her ugliness, because pretty women (women with small feet, that is) are no use on the land. She bears child after child to Wang Lung, works at his side till the very hour of her confinements, obeys him like a dog. Wang Lung's feeling for her has nothing of love as we know it, only duty. Certain things are due to her, as certain things are due to an ox, and in these he never fails. But she is only a convenience; to love her would be slightly shameful, a kind of infatuation, like loving an ox. How could one love a woman with large feet? Love is for concubines. When O Lan lies dying, worn out with work and childbirths, Wang Lung looks at her and thinks how ugly she is. He knows that she has been a good wife, even dimly feels that he might be sorry for her. But he is not sorry; her big feet repel him too much. Still, he knows his duty. He buys her an expensive coffin. E. A. B.

SWEET MAN. *By Gilmore Millen* (Cassell) 7*s.* 6*d.*
PO' BUCKRA. *By G. M. Shelby and S. G. Stoney* (Gollancz) 7*s* 6*d.*

Both these novels deal with the colour bar and both of them are, in my opinion, handicapped by inappropriate titles which do their thesis rather less than justice. For *Sweet Man*, despite certain physical candours, tells a starkly bitter tale of a young 'yellow' Negro's ignoble life and death, and *Po' Buckra* is only relatively concerned with its "po' Buckra" or poor white characters, its hero being one of those Ishmaelitish individuals in whose veins the blood of Negro, Red Indian and European uneasily mingles and who are contemptuously known in the Southern States as "Brass Ankles." The contention, that men of mixed (or muddled!) race are practically sure to develop the varied vices of their various ancestors to the exclusion of their corresponding virtues, would still seem to want for proof; but, so far as these two unhappy hybrids are concerned, the experiment in 'dys-

genics' was certainly not encouraging. The egregious "John Henry" in *Sweet Man* and the shifty irreclaimable "Barty Gunson" in *Po' Buckra* seem to have escaped their share of atavistic virtues as completely as it is possible for human creatures to do. And the sympathy with which we follow their unerring trails of misadventure and misconduct is of a very different sort from that which we lavished in our youth on the excellent "Uncle Tom" in his increasingly uncomfortable "Cabin".

But it is, all the same, a very intense sympathy and the writers manage to secure it for their unheroic heroes without any undue use either of didactics or sob-stuff. For more reasons than one, these two serious, but quite exceptionally thrilling, stories are worth more than a merely superficial reading and one can only hope that the ever-rising flood of 'Good New Fiction for the Library List' will not sweep them too soon beyond the reach of the readers that they deserve. Readers that they might *serve*, too! In spite of much woolly humanitarian talk, there is not really, in these Islands, much interest in the problem of the colour bar. The general feeling seems to be that in these days it is the concern of America and that English people don't need to bother about it. In the way of revealing the colour bar as a localised variant of the biggest and most universal problem of our human relations—the primitive instinct *to dislike the unlike*—a good deal really remains to be done, and works of imagination—slightingly called works of fiction—seem still to be among the best means of doing it. G. M. H.

BOLSHEVISM AT A DEADLOCK. *By Karl Kautsky* (Allen & Unwin) 6*s*.

"The shock with which one returns to other authors, to find them loose, slipshod, vague and meretricious, makes one realise his (Lenin's) uniqueness as a writer." Few exercises are better calculated to make one endorse this pronouncement of Prince Mirsky's than a study of the book under review. Its object is to prove the imminent and inevitable collapse of Bolshevism. But a generation which, seventeen years ago, was assured by experts of similar mentality that a European war was (*a*) impossible, (*b*) bound to end within three months through exhausted resources, may be forgiven if it prefers to await the issue of events, rather than prophesy absolute failure or success. But if the book will convince only those who are convinced already, it is profoundly interesting as a psychological study. Kautsky tells us little that is new (or true) about Bolshevism, but much about himself. A very un-

flattering, because unconscious, self-portrait emerges: of a man shallow, vain, self-seeking; "loose, slipshod, vague and meretricious". We must leave it for posterity to discover whether his brand of social and political economy or Lenin's is superior; but we can decide for ourselves, immediately, out of their writings, which of the two is the great man of his time. Kautsky's object is to prove his case; Lenin's to test the truth of his case, and, if it prove false, to find a better one. Kautsky is the complete egoist; Lenin perfectly disinterested: Kautsky all for his own glorification, Lenin the man who completely forgot himself in his absorption in the endeavour to free humanity.

M. ROBINSON

YOFUKU, OR JAPAN IN TROUSERS. *By Sherard Vines* (Wishart) 7*s.* 6*d.*

Travel books, especially those of the better sort such as Mr. Huxley's or D. H. Lawrence's, reveal more the state of the writer's mind than the state of the country through which the author has passed. Mr. Sherard Vines after six years as a Professor of English in Japan has here revealed himself as a charming and cultured Englishman who has read and can quote from all the books usually reviewed in the *Criterion*, but as one whose spleen and liver make him take refuge in preciosity and irony.

Far from finding Japan "a pageant of gold and scarlet temples, mountains dredged with icing sugar, flesh pink cherry avenues and polychromatic dancing girls" Mr. Vines is fascinated and repulsed by the primitive quality of the drainage and sewage systems: although its people wash their bodies thrice as much as the English do, he still contends that taken all in all Japan is a most squalid and unhygienic empire. Moreover, the Japanese is all the time trying to keep up appearances, to "save face" before the other first-rate powers. This leads to most transparent and magnificent hypocrisy and humbug. The Japanese imitates, for business reasons, the outward appearance of the American-negroid non-conformity, yet gay lasciviousness and the phallic cult peep continually from under the skirts of puritanism.

The primary culprit is the American pastor, who preaches on "golfing with God" and who leads the Japanese to imagine the god of the Occident as a handshaking Y.M.C.A. manager with a talent for organising social evenings. But the end is not yet. The Buddhist Bishop of Hawaii is waging a holy and gallant war against the non-conformists

of that group of islands. After all, Christianity may be the religion for the West, but perhaps the Japanese would be well advised to repatriate our Christian missionaries and teach us to leave other countries to find their own salvation. JOHN RODGERS

SEED ON THE WIND. *By Rex Stout* (Kennerley) 7*s*. 6*d*.

Many critics, the publisher says, consider this the most important novel to come out of America in the last five years. Why not ten, or fifty? It is a Havelock Ellis "sexual history", unfolded backwards in best psycho-analytical style, of a woman whose passion is for having babies—each by a different father. It is very cleverly told and suggests that Mr. Stout is worth watching; but does it really matter.

EIGHT VICTORIAN POETS. *By F. L. Lucas* (Cambridge University Press) 4*s*. 6*d*.

There is a way of popularising literature without cheapening it, and Mr. Lucas's manner of exposition passes the most stringent tests. He makes the study of poetry seem attractive without making it seem simple. He has judgment as well as zest, imagination as well as scholarship; and he knows that an ounce of suggestion is worth a ton of dogma. Above all, he writes concretely, and can find just the image or the analogy which will enlighten a difficult issue.

The Introduction to this book is a brilliant and enthusiastic "apology" for poetry: a statement, directed to the plain but intelligent man, which shows what pleasures and what discipline poetry can afford him. It affirms, with argument as well as passion, the belief that poetry, far from being a luxury for the elect, is both essential and accessible to democracy.

In the rest of the book, which is a survey of eight of the Victorian poets, Mr. Lucas does more than set these figures in perspective and unravel the critical judgments that have been passed on them. By reference and comparison and illustration in particulars, he is all the time building up a statement of the general principles of poetry. Closely knit into the appraisement of Browning and Hardy and Tennyson and William Morris and the rest there is the thread of a theory of poetry which to a perceptive reader may serve as " the end of a golden string." This is a book that deserves the warmest recommendation, no less to those who know their way about poetry than to those who are looking for a way into it. W. E. W.

*Printed by the Shenval Press, 58 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1, and published for the*

# Contents

JULY 1931: VOL. 2. NO. 4. NEW SERIES.

# *Books to Note*

THE SCANDAL AND CREDULITIES OF JOHN AUBREY. *Edited by John Collier.* Peter Davies. 8/6 (In his introduction the editor speaks of the "lovely and important pleasure" of dipping into Aubrey's anecdotes of Bacon, Raleigh, Andrewes, Ben Jonson, etc. Lovely and important, perhaps. Pleasure, certainly.)

SAINT JEAN DE LA CROIX. *By Jean Baruzi.* Paris. Félix Alcan. 80 francs. (728 pages. Revised edition of a masterpiece of interpretive criticism, and a monument of learning.)

PAGES CHOISIES. *By Léon Shestov.* N.R.F., Paris, 43 rue de Beaune. 15 francs. (Selections from the work of a brilliant and original philosopher, known to *Adelphi* readers, translated from Russian into French by Boris de Schloezer.)

# *Some Periodicals*

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW. (Vol. LXIX, No. 415. June 1931.) 9 Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.1. 2/6 (A sumptuous half-crown's worth for those who like photographs of modern interior decoration and architecture, and colour reproduction.)

THIS QUARTER. (June Number.) Wm. Heinemann. 5/- (This magazine maintains a remarkably high standard. It has a distinctive policy and is edited with taste. The current number is strong in every department, in essays, poetry and stories. True, it succumbs to the prevailing epidemic of Eliotiasis but that, no doubt, was inevitable.

THE OXFORD OUTLOOK. (Vol. XI, No. 55.) Basil Blackwell, Oxford. 2/- (The Summer number includes a translation by Isaiah Berlin of Alexander Blok's "Collapse of Humanism." This piece of poet's prose is more stimulating in its purely intuitive approach to the theme than the more usual deductive expositions of duller men. Among the customary features, the ravages of Eliotiasis are still noticeable, though there is some promise of convalescence.)

THE ISLAND. (Vol. I, No. 1.) Published by The Islanders, 12 Girdlers Road, W.14. 2/- (The first number of one of those non-commercial productions devoted to the aims of a group which are always welcome for their individuality, and which tend to grow rarer as the business of magazine production becomes more mechanised. No T. S. Eliot, not yet.)

# THE ADELPHI

VOL. 2, NO. 4, JULY 1931


## THE ADELPHI FORUM

*The contributors to the* ADELPHI FORUM *this month are so vigorously controversial that we have decided to allow them the first pages of the magazine. To the casual reader the discussion may suggest dog eating dog, or what Lenin called "the indiscipline of the intellectuals". But we believe the issue between Mr. Murry and his critics is crucial. Each man's belief in this matter will vitally affect his attitude to every problem, from the personal in the deepest sense to the social in the broadest.*—ED.

## *Religion and "The Adelphi"*

THE Editor has kindly given me the opportunity of making a few comments upon Mr. G. B. Edwards' notice of my *Prospects of Humanism* in the June number of the *Adelphi.* I shall be excused, I hope, if instead of dealing exclusively with his spirited assault upon my essay I pass to certain wider issues which it must inevitably raise for all those who are interested in the future of the New Romanticism.

The aim to which the *Adelphi* is addressing itself need not be characterised in these pages. In essence, it is the exploration of the possibilities of a new mode of consciousness, in which the head shall be organically co-ordinated with the heart. In so far as the paper emphasises the need for this co-ordination it is performing an invaluable service; this one is only too glad to allow. But for myself, while being perfectly sympathetic to this venture, I am inclined to doubt whether the line along which Mr. Murry and his followers are attacking the problem is really likely to prove fruitful. My object in this article is to give this dissatisfaction as clearly defined a form as I can.

§1

I begin with the vital question of the neo-romantic attitude to the intellect. The plea of the *Adelphi,* as we have noted, is for a proper integration of the passional and the intellectual faculties of the soul.

But it would seem that what is actually commended to us by the romantic thinker is a condition of wholeness which is only to be effected at the cost of giving altogether inadequate satisfaction to the demands of the rational nature. It is a cardinal tenet of Mr. Murry's philosophy (which appears, for all intents and purposes, to be the accepted philosophy of the *Adelphi* as well) that what he designates as the "practical consciousness", the consciousness which is concerned with the plane of relative manifestations, cannot bring us into touch with reality; this is the function of the "imaginative consciousness" alone, the activity of which is one of pure contemplation. I will not examine this antithesis here; I have already in my book drawn attention to some of the formidable difficulties which it entails. What I wish to stress at the moment is the dangerous type of anti-intellectualism which it fosters in those who have seen fit to adopt it as the basis of their thought. The effect is to carry the revolt from reason—a revolt which is up to a point salutary enough—to really perilous extremes. For the unhappy consequence is that by the thoroughgoing neo-romantic practically every type of "abstract thinking" comes to be regarded as being on exactly the same level. Yet it is surely evident that in our efforts to lay hold on an avowedly incomprehensible reality we are driven to exert ourselves to the uttermost to formulate our experience in rational, "abstract" terms. We are bound, certainly, to reconcile ourselves to the fact that, since being is organic, no purely intellectual formulation of the truth can ever be final. But it is no less true that the form of things, the processes of the cosmos, the system of hierarchies, interdependencies and mutual determinations which are elicited by the reason are, to say the least of it, as much a revelation of the Real as is that revelation which is afforded to the poet—and to the romantic poet especially—by what may be described by contrast as significant particularity.

In a word, we must recognise that there are different modes of Imagination, poetic, philosophic and scientific, by all of which our experience of reality is symbolised, and none of which we can safely afford to neglect if we wish to orientate ourselves properly to life. But I find among modern romantics (Mr. H. I'A. Fausset is a brilliant exception) a lamentable disposition to limit its scope and treat the rational mind with something like disdain.

The attitude is very well exemplified by Mr. Edwards' criticism of

my own book. The central thesis which the work advanced was substantially the *Adelphi* thesis: the thesis that our fundamental problem to-day is that of bringing the mind and the heart into a condition of creative unity. My handling of the theme was, however, essentially *intellectual*; I was not offering a symbolical picture or delivering myself of a poetic manifesto, but putting forward a closely reasoned and doubtless somewhat wearisome piece of analysis. It was placed, however, in the hands of a reviewer for whom, as a typical romantic, every type of theorising is equally suspect, for whom there is no real distinction between mechanistic science and natural philosophy, or between academic philosophy and the rationalisation of a spiritual relationship to the universe; and who detects no essential difference between that type of reasoning which has its origin in a discontinuity of being, and that which represents the result of an attempt to attain to the greatest possible degree of intellectual abstraction which is compatible with fidelity to the experience of the "heart". In treating of philosophy I wrote the words: "The only philosophising that is worth having is that which has come into being through the individual's expressing in terms of severely abstract thought a consciousness which might alternatively, given another type of temperament, have expressed itself in terms of poetic creation". I wrote also that philosophy must "utilise all the resources of reason to substantiate the fact that the nature of Reality cannot be fully apprehended by the exercise of the reason alone". An intellectual enterprise of this type has, it would appear, practically no meaning for a mind of Mr. Edwards' stamp. The fascinating and vital work of such a writer as Ramon Fernandez, in which one finds an austerely classical intelligence engaged in the scrutiny of a type of experience to which the romantic soul is alone sensitive, would be for him simply devoid of significance.

So, at any rate, his treatment of my own essay would seem to suggest. For, although it was evident enough that I was at least *attempting* (however unsuccessfully) to deal with some of the problems of the "unified consciousness", he dismissed me impatiently as a barren intellectualist, a person who "takes refuge in complexities of thought which are confusing and misleading". Yet the whole point of the book lay precisely in the endeavour which it embodied to hold on at one and the same time both to the sensuous and to the ideal without failing to do justice to either.

Equally characteristic was his attitude to Mr. Murry himself. After remarking that Mr. Murry has lost himself in "a maze of self-hypnotic intellectualism" and that my criticism of his theories is accordingly "quite justified" (I would not make such an extreme claim myself), he goes on to observe calmly that such an analysis as that which I have undertaken is in any case "a futile procedure", as I have failed signally to penetrate to the man himself. So we are asked to believe that provided a thinker is somehow "right" in his attitude to the world, it is a matter of trifling significance that (if we are to take this view of Mr. Murry's work) he organises that attitude intellectually in terms of a system of ideas which is vitiated by the most serious inconsistencies! And this even when we are concerned not with a poet, but with a critic who has deliberately taken upon himself the responsibility of providing people with their standards of value! For such a thinker as Mr. Edwards all purely intellectual activity becomes therefore nothing more than a sort of incidental accompaniment of spiritual activity, and not only an accompaniment, but an *irrelevant* accompaniment at that: there is no vital correspondence between experience and its rationalisation. Abstract thinking is merely epiphenomenal in character, so completely unrelated to being that the fact that a person's formal philosophy is profoundly unsatisfying may be accepted without the least perturbation. One type of theorising is as good—or as futile—as another: all that matters is the response of the soul to the ineffable, the mystic throb of communion between the solar plexus and the heart of the World Organism. And this really will not do. People who adopt this easy-going I-contradict-myself-very-well-I-contradict-myself attitude are not properly fighting to achieve a "new synthesis"; they are seeking with inexcusable slovenliness to simplify the problem by kicking the intellect downstairs.

§2

I wish I had space at my disposal here to indicate how this romantic disregard of the rational element in experience finds expression in the attitude of the *Adelphi*. I am reluctantly bound to confess that over and over again I have met in its otherwise most suggestive pages with a type of philosophical thinking which positively cannot be tolerated by any person who has any respect for the proper function of reason. But it is, apparently, accepted by the majority of the readers of the

paper without embarrassment or compunction (at least, such protests as find their way into its pages are faint and irresolute in the extreme). And the reason is, quite simply, that the reader to whom these dubious speculations are addressed is in nine cases out of ten the *literary* reader. After a good many years of experience, I have been forced to the conclusion that when it is a question of philosophical theorising the literary reader will swallow almost anything. He is not concerned with implications and inferences; it is sufficient for him that the passage which he is studying gives him a vague and genial sense of well-being and expansion. What he demands is not *meaning* as the philosopher understands it, but uplift. As a result he is at the mercy of any talented but sophistical writer who is capable of presenting his ideas with eloquence and charm. He will passively accept from that subtle philosopher, M. de Gaultier, an interpretation of mysticism of the most perverse and misleading order. He will listen with docility to that accomplished wizard, Mr. Santayana, while he expounds an æsthetic philosophy of the most dangerous type. And he will remain undismayed when Mr. Murry rejects the idea of a personal God on the basis of the findings of a "practical consciousness" which in another connexion is represented as impotent to relate us to the Real.

§3

This weakness in the romantic's attitude to the mind is inherent also in his attitude to morality. The one, indeed, inevitably implies the other. For if that plane of relatives with which the "practical consciousness" concerns itself is deemed to be unreal, then the activity of the moral will, which is employed essentially in distinguishing between "good" and "evil", becomes unreal as well. Once assume that it is by pure contemplation alone that the Real can be experienced, once assume that to the purified vision every object becomes equally "significant"—and the nerve of morality is cut at the root. It loses all claim to transcendental sanction and becomes a matter of personal prejudice or inclination alone. Why be good when badness is just as lovely to the contemplative eye?

I am aware that the plane of the moral is not ultimate. Every person who is in the least imaginative must appreciate the fact that on occasion we can enjoy a state of mind in which the fact that a thing *is* is perfectly sufficient for us. There is indeed a sense in which, as Mr. Murry urges,

a syphilitic child is as "valid" as a healthy one. But it is also no less true that from another point of view the problem of morality is for us a problem of life and death. If we lie, if we fail in courage or loyalty, we defile ourselves at the core. This fact is just as momentous for us as the other fact that in a different sense the spiritual lies altogether beyond all opposites. So we are faced with a contradiction, a contradiction which needs in some fashion to be resolved.

My objection to the neo-romantic attitude is that this type of problem is never fairly faced, but invariably slurred over. Mr. Murry, for instance, tells us on the one hand that we should cultivate that untainted vision for which the spectacle of "things as they are" is sufficient, while on the other he exhorts us passionately to pursue the path of virtue by making ourselves into "significant variations". That is to say, without even alluding to the fact that he is doing so, he leaves the two halves of his philosophy completely uncorrelated. And this cannot satisfy us. We have an obstinate feeling that he is abandoning the problem just at the point where the real work begins, and where, what is more, it first becomes vital from the human point of view. Nor shall we be satisfied if he appeals in reply to the principle which he has elsewhere laid down that it is only the "practical consciousness" which is disturbed by such inconsistencies. For it is on the plane of the "practical consciousness" that we are in this case engaged.

§4

I come finally to the romantic attitude to Religion. The religion of the *Adelphi* seems for all practical purposes to be that of Mr. Murry. It is distinguished by several very revolutionary features: the notion of a personal God is abandoned, morality is deprived of its transcendental sanction, the element of the supernatural is completely repudiated. But when the more orthodox student of the subject complains that these conceptions raise for us very grave difficulties, and have as a result been rejected by some of the deepest religious thinkers in the past, Mr. Murry blandly assures him that this is because these people did not undergo the mystical experience of death and rebirth in a sufficiently profound sense.

But surely the burden of justification rests rather upon Mr. Murry himself. Why, after all, should we expect that the religious minds of

humanity for the last few thousand years should have been so fatally misled, and that it has been left for this romantic philosopher to set them right? Is there no force, then, in the appeal to experience? Is it not with Mr. Murry very much as it was with Freud in the years after the War? A thinker appeared with the startling contention that the key to all our reactions was to be found in the fact of sex. And many quite intelligent persons believed for a time that he had really reversed the whole tradition of human experience. But within a decade the one-sidedness of his views had become manifest.

We come back to that blessed innocence of the literary person to which I have already referred. Mr. Murry's religion remains satisfying to those who, like its sponsor, have reached this region of experience along the pathway of art. Such thinkers, alive as they are to many aspects of the problem which escape the narrowly orthodox, yet have no really valid standards with which to measure manifestations of the religious spirit. If I may be forgiven for saying so, they are too inexperienced. They are prepared to accept without question such bare assertions as that we have outgrown the classical experience of God, or that we have nothing to learn from the theologians. And conversely any pronouncements on the subject of religion, however unconsidered, can be almost sure of their respectful attention. Listen, for example, to the confident accents of Mr. Edwards:

> All experience is religious; it merely varies in intensity and value. . . . The so-called religious experience . . . is the experience of a man when he forgives and is forgiven, when he loves and is loved. . . . The Lord created the world and all that is in it; and deep within His world He has remained ever since. . . . The only serenity worth while is not one which is artificially invoked by the deliberate exercise of spiritual discipline, but one which is earned by suffering a full responsiveness to the natural demands and relationships of life, etc., etc.

These are palpably the judgments of a man who is altogether unaware of the enormous complexity of the issues with which he is dealing, who imagines that he is solving problems when he is really only defining where the real issues begin. Could anyone possibly write like that who was familiar even to the smallest degree with the mass of material accumulated by modern research in the field of religious psychology? Or if the testimony of such thinkers as Newman, von

Hügel, Soloviev, or Karl Barth meant anything to him whatsoever? Obviously not.

§5

It comes to this. What we are in need of at this stage in the modern religious adventure are not declarations and manifestoes, but *science.* By this I mean that among those people who are really alive to spiritual realities to-day there must be free discussion and a sincere and disinterested attempt to do justice to all the diverse aspects of religion. As Mr. Aldous Huxley has urged in a letter recently published in these pages, we must concern ourselves with "verifiable psychology". And it was from this point of view that my so-called "attack" on Mr. Murry was written. I was not concerned primarily to oppose his conclusions, but to make a plea for a proper evaluation and a more extensive review of the facts. I do not dismiss affirmations and personal confessions as unimportant; they have their place, and an important place at that. But they need to be supplemented by scientific thinking.

There are those among us who had hoped that when the *Adelphi* was reconstituted it would become a sort of forum for the exchange of views among those who were sincerely grappling with the problem of modern religion, "a medium of expression", to quote from the prospectus issued by the Editors, "for those who believe in a new integration of consciousness". It would appear, however, that it is concerned instead with advancing the views of a single, if by no means insignificant, faction. This may well serve to give prominence to an attitude with which we can profitably be made acquainted. But at the same time it cannot but diminish both the extent and the impressiveness of the paper's appeal.

LAWRENCE HYDE

# *The Faith of Unfaith*

I DO not feel that I can usefully reply to Mr. Plowman's criticism of my "religion". Of all subjects those of "God" and "faith" seem to be among the least profitable to *argue* about. In my essay on *The Veil of Good and Evil* I made an attempt to communicate a truth which is to me self-evident. I am sorry that it is not self-evident to Mr. Plowman; but I am neither surprised nor cast down at his inability to understand my meaning.

Is it a defect in my statement, or in his comprehension, that is to blame? I do not know. I did my best to make my meaning comprehensible. If I could have done more to that end, I would have done it. If I could do it now, I would do it. But I fear that any effort at re-statement would be merely reiteration; convincing to the convinced, but to the doubtful a cause of added doubt and to the hostile of further hostility.

My chief offence, it seems to me, in Mr. Plowman's eyes arises from that which is my chief merit in my own: namely, that I have striven to make it impossible for anyone to misunderstand me. They may not understand me—I can put up with that—but they shall not misunderstand me. I might say, for instance, with some truth that I am in agreement with Mr. Plowman's concluding sentence: "I am without self-confidence: in the God that I know I have perfect faith. His being perpetually enters and redeems my world of existence". But I chose, very positively, not to use that form of statement. It does not promote understanding and it does give occasion for misunderstanding. I can attach a profound and satisfying meaning to those words, but I cannot ensure that others would attach the same meaning to them. I have no safeguard against the abuse of the words, if I were to make them mine.

Mr. Plowman's whole essay is a warning of what would happen were I to take the easy path of accepting statements which I know to be capable of misunderstanding. I should be interpreted in Mr. Plowman's sense. I understand that sense. I know what Mr. Plowman means, *and I do not believe that it is true*. His total meaning is false to my experience of life. Therefore I am bound to reject it. He insists that it is true to his own experience of life. That I cannot deny. If he is content, I am satisfied. I have no desire to convert him; but he must not seek to make a proselyte of me.

The difference between our positions is vast, and unbridgable by words. We might use the same phrases, each with his own meaning, but the meanings would be quite different, and quite irreconcilable. No diplomatic compromise is tolerable. I wrote in my essay that "imagination, if it can be described as a will at all, is the will to submit to experience. Ultimately, I suppose it is just an instinct, a simple being thus and not otherwise in the total organism". To which Mr. Plowman replies that " to describe imagination as just instinct is to be woefully ignorant either of imagination or of instinct". Well, I must put up with my woeful ignorance; it is mine, it is me—it also is an instinct, in the sense in which I describe an instinct, "a simple being thus and not otherwise in the total organism". Mr. Plowman would summon Blake to teach me better. Imagination *is* "spiritual sensation". Very good. And what is "spiritual sensation" but a simple habit of the total organism? What difference to this does the fact that it is called "spiritual" make?

To tell the truth, I am growing very weary of the insistence on the "spiritual" habits as generically distinct from the other habits of the human organism. They are distinct in the sense that they are different: but that is all. The dichotomy of man into "spiritual" and "sensual" is no longer tenable. Man *is* a unity. I don't wish to argue about it. Let those who cannot accept my axiom go their own way, and leave me to mine. But I feel impatient when I am told that I am a sort of renegade to the spiritual life, and that I am confusing the condition of being beyond good and evil with the condition of being below them. Spirit is the highest reality to me; but I believe that it is only attained by a complete denudation of the *ego*. From this complete denudation in which I passionately believe, Mr. Plowman seems to me to shrink away. His creed is so precious to him that he cannot suffer it to be torn away from him. He wants the universe to satisfy his heart, and he will have it so. Eternity must compensate for existence. I hold that that very natural and profound desire is the last refuge of the *ego*. It has to be rooted out. Life will root it out if only we allow life to do it. But the *ego* tenaciously defends itself against that eradication. From my point of view that is Mr. Plowman's condition. His *ego* has built a universe in which to hide itself from destruction, and he calls that eternity. He refuses to die his death, and suffer his final purification.

The worst of these statements is that they seem to imply self-

righteousness. I appear to indicate that I am a better man than Mr. Plowman. I should like to be as good. But I can cry, with Keats, "Give me this credit—that I strive to know myself". I am as a man who has waked up, by painful stages, from a dream. Mr. Plowman is dreaming still. I accept the fact. But when he would persuade others, and me, that it is my duty to go on dreaming, I have no choice but to decline, as clearly and emphatically as I can.

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

# *God, Faith and Mr. Murry*

I RECOGNISE as valid Mr. Plowman's description of the state "beyond Good and Evil which is to be attained only by knowledge and love of the will of God", although I should prefer to say "only by perception of reality". But why do both these writers speak as though "love truly impersonal and disinterested", the change from selfhood to selflessness, the submission to something not oneself, were attainable only through the experience of a beloved person's death? Mr. Murry, with his tendency to dogmatise, lays great stress in *God* on his approach to vision through despair; and implies that this is the one way of attainment; he repeated himself to this effect recently in the *Adelphi*, at the end of a course of lectures, so that the passage acquired added emphasis; and now Mr. Plowman follows suit. I agree with him that the only criterion of validity is personal experience; and this informs me, what my intellectual idea of probability would suggest: that there is *no one way* to a state beyond Good and Evil but many ways. Nor is that state attained, even through despair, once and for all. Mr. Murry is a case in point; for nobody can read his works with attention and not notice that in him what I call purity is intermittent: he can declare the truth with moving accuracy on one page, and indulge his selfhood on the next. And further, besides being only intermittent (except in great saints or adepts) once it has been attained, the state can be attained not only by a sudden blaze but by a gradual dawn.

It would be tragic if the growth of this species of religion out of the waste land should be marred at the outset by dogmatism, which is only ill-disguised vainglory. One of the delights of existence is to perceive

in widely dissimilar minds and writings the knowledge that human development is going and must go from selfhood to disinterested love —in Freud for instance, or in W. B. Yeats, Mrs. Shove, Edwin Muir. Some of them would hotly repudiate Mr. Plowman's definition. I myself do not believe in God; where he speaks of the knowledge and love of the will of God, I should speak of the pure perception (here synonymous with love) of reality. But I know by his description that we mean the same thing. E. B. C. JONES

# *Mr. Plowman's Dualism*

MANY of the younger readers of the *Adelphi* will, I think, share my regret that Mr. Plowman chose two such terms as "God" and "Faith" for *casus belli* in his criticism of Mr. Murry's essay, *The Veil of Good and Evil.* For many now-a-days such words are blurred with a haze of unreality which obscures unnecessarily any discussion into which they are introduced; but it is chiefly in his concluding sentences that Mr. Plowman seems to me to betray the dualistic tendency which almost inevitably accompanies the use of the word "God", and upon which I would like briefly to comment.

In the passage where he describes his profoundest experience of reality (which he calls "God"), Mr. Plowman is in line not only with Mr. Murry but with all who have ever attempted to describe the ultimate realisation of man: that he is not "himself" but that he is one with that Life which is manifested in "himself" and in all the other forms of creation throughout time and space. But the concluding passage is a disappointment. It appears that he still believes "himself" to be separate from that Being which he calls God. He finds it necessary to assert that he is not "self-confident", and that he has "Faith" in a Being Who perpetually enters into and redeems his world of existence. But the gulf that "Faith" has to bridge is a figment of the dualistic mind. *Omnis existentia est perfectio.* We have no need of Faith in God; nor of any Divine Being to enter and redeem the world of existence. It is sufficient to see reality, which is neither good nor evil, hateful nor lovable, but eternal and perfect. The shadows which seem to obscure it are cast by our own minds—which are opaque, but may become

transparent. This realisation is no longer impossible—it becomes ultimately inevitable, once the dualistic tension in the mind has generated the first spark of pure perception. When we have seen deeply enough into reality to know this, we shall no longer fear to be called self-confident, because we shall have lost self-consciousness. We shall no longer fear the judgment of ourselves or others upon our actions, because Life itself will act through us.

But the free and disinterested action of Life cannot take place through us while our minds are still casting shadows on the perfection around us, for while the shadows are there we shall still be obsessed with the problem of Evil: the ideal of free and irresponsible action will seem to us to spring from weariness or indifference and we shall not recognise it for what it truly is—the goal and consummation of Life. The actions of one who has achieved this realisation will seem "unrighteous" to some, to others "righteous"; but for himself it will be sufficient to know that they are *conscious acts* and not, like most of what passes under that name, *semi-conscious reactions.*

RICHARD REES

# *Dualism and Spiritual Life*

*"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit: marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."*

THE world as we know it is obviously the result of a conflict of forces. What is called "the problem of evil" is an attempt to account for one of those forces: it is an attempt rationally to separate from those things which we like, those things which we dislike. In the effort to establish universal principle, it has always been an unsuccessful attempt because, ultimately, good and evil are only the names we award to results we approve or disapprove—as will be readily recognised by those intelligent enough to see that there can be no finality about moral judgments. Morality is, however, a temporary and partial recognition of what is true, namely, that the world as we know it results from a contention of forces—forces which may perhaps be most easily described as static and dynamic. Metaphysically speaking, then, we may say that matter results from an activity where previously there had been none; but as this idea is incomprehensible to reason it

may be more intelligibly represented by analogy between the creative activity of the artist and the creative activity of the world as we know it.

Every work of art is the result of a unique contention of forces. The originality of a work of art is determined by its conception: if that conception is due to an imaginative experience then the work of art will be original; but if the conception is not due to such an experience then true conception has not taken place—the work is not organic and whatever of originality may result will be due to subsidiary conceptions made while the work is in progress. But assuming true conception, there is immediately set up in the artist a passionate desire for creative conflict; and his desire is to transport from the world of things immaterial (i.e. from his mental vision, or mental audition) what he has "seen" or "heard", and by means of sensuous interpretation to bring it into the world of actuality. Thus he employs, it may be, paint and canvas, and, by using them so as to give a visual similitude of natural objects, is able to make visible something that has hitherto been invisible. That something is of course his vision. The painting is an image of his vision, not the vision itself; but the truth of his picture will depend upon the degree of living intensity with which paint and canvas upcall his vision.

Now the point to remark is that the most lively element in this activity is one which is sensibly invisible and materially non-existent. What the artist sees in his moment of perception cannot be transferred to the perception of another except by some image, for it has no material substance and indeed no existence apart from his imagination. Yet, if he will submit his vision to the incarnation of paint, and labour to create something which is as lively an imitation of what he has seen in his mind's eye as he, by the exercise of all his energies, can make it, then what formerly had no sensuous life will appear in the world of matter: paint and canvas will express a form of life that had hitherto not found expression.

In pure perception there is no conflict; but directly the desire to give this perception form begins to germinate, conflict begins—a conflict analogous to the growth of the amœba, or the entry of any new principle into an old organism. And—what is of the whole importance to us at this moment—*this conflict is life as we know it in this world.*

I have used this analogy to suggest that an anterior cause to the

manifestation of life as we know it must be sought if we are to have sane conceptions about life. The conflict we behold in every manifestation of life is necessary for its appearance but not inherent in its conception. The whole question of dualism therefore resolves itself into a matter of time-sense: if we are speaking of conceptions we are wrong to use the terms of dualism; if we are speaking of appearances we are wrong to use the terms of monism. In other words, dualism is the true condition of the life of everything in this world: only in the world of pure spirit is reality conceivable apart from conflict.

MAX PLOWMAN

# *Materialism*

THERE are some people who have disliked my use in this book* and elsewhere of the word materialism. The word naturalism might indeed do as well, but nevertheless, I do not feel tempted to substitute it. For I cannot but feel that their very dislike of the word materialism supplies an adequate reason for its retention. Their objection seems to me to be largely based on the flavour of iron filings it leaves in the mouth. For my part I have no dislike of this flavour, which I even regard as an essential ingredient in any modern cake. For me the symbol of modernity is the steamship. It is useful and it is beautiful, but it has killed one of the most beautiful of all things which have ever existed—the sailing ship. That lovely thing of the past is the price we pay for the lovely thing of the present. If it costs an effort we must still pay that price and pay it with good grace. To long for the return of the sailing ship, to hanker after the good old times, is to repudiate the creative spirit, to refuse collaboration with the world to-day.

As we stand we are still on the threshold of a mechanical age. And are we already tired of it? Or is it just that the tired ones have the loudest voice? Certainly, there are many voices raised against the machine, proclaiming it to be devoid of any ultimate significance. But people will never find an ultimate meaning unless they can find a meaning all along the way. And if they can do that then the ultimate meaning loses

* This passage is taken from the preface to the new edition of Mr. Sainsbury's *Theory of Polarity* (The Adelphi) 3*s*. 6*d* and 2*s*. 6*d*.

its significance. Those who can find a meaning *in* life are not afraid to admit that the tombstone is its goal. We leave it to more primitive people, the Russians, to make an ideal out of the job in hand. But with our capacities what could we not achieve if we had their capacity to believe it was worth while. We look in vain for something spiritual *behind* the machine. They give spirituality to it.

This generation is content to enjoy all the physical comforts that modernity can offer it, but it is loth to relinquish those spiritual comforts which modernity would seek to take away. It is just this renunciation which is implicit in the word materialism whose moral counterpart is stoicism, and whose æsthetic counterpart is epicureanism. The ability to renounce something is at the basis of all style. Whether in philosophy, art or manners, true style is based on choice, and that choice is, in practice, not so much between the good and the bad as between the good and the best. Thus style rests chiefly on the rejection of the less good, on the ability to withstand the temptation to include too much. Where this ability is lacking, all thought, all art, all action becomes mere profusion.

GEOFFREY SAINSBURY

## T. O. BEACHCROFT

# *A Young Man in a Hurry*

OLD Mr. Gromm believed in taking his time. He liked to go about his business slowly, nodding his whiskered face with unhurried calm. That was the way to get things done well in the long run. "I takes me time, but pretty general I gets thur arlright. But I takes me time". It seemed almost as if Mr. Gromm's time was different from other people's time—the outcome of a long collusion between two old cronies. With the aid of time Gromm had conjured up substantial possessions; his cottage and a neat little bit of land round it, foot by foot, year by year, for fifty years. Gromm and Time understood each other pretty well by now.

But Percy Iggdon was a young fellow of a different temper altogether. He had auburn hair and a sanguine colour. He thought Gromm was an old hunks. One evening he came skidding and clattering down the road on his bicycle, just as Mr. Gromm was walking very slowly from his cottage to the well. Percy was in a tearing hurry to get home, because he wanted to see if he had won a prize in a newspaper competition. He rang his bell, shouted several times and then banged violently into Mr. Gromm's back. The bicycle shot one way, Percy crashed on to the hard road, and Mr. Gromm was hurled into the ditch in front of his own cottage gate. Percy was terrified at the force of the collision. Surely he must have broken some of those brittle old bones?

But even as he took stock of the bearded old man lying in the ditch he felt a desire to laugh at him. Silly old garp. If only he'd had the sense to move and think a bit quicker this need not have happened, wandering over the road like an antique off a tombstone or something.

Mr. Gromm remained in the ditch quite motionless. Fortun-

ately it was dry and as it was summer, the lush growth made soft falling. He might have been sitting in an armchair, with his feet stuck up on the road in front of him, and his back on the bank behind. Percy took him under one arm and gently pulled him up.

"I'm terrible sorry, Mr. Gromm", he said, "I am really. I 'ope I didn't 'urt you?"

Mr. Gromm slowly dusted himself and picked a few stray grasses off his coat with care.

"I ain't 'urt", he said resentfully, "but it's little short of a miracle you 'oven't broke my back. I should 'a' thought you be got more sense than to come tearin' down 'ere like a scarlded tom-cat. You'd 'ave only got yerself to thank if you'd mucked me up to rights."

"I'm very sorry. I'm very sorry", muttered Percy. He was thinking only of the competition. But as he turned away Mr. Gromm laid a restraining hand on his arm.

"As it 'appens it's arlright, but supposin' it 'ad been old Mrs. Mutch, or my grand-niece Josephine as is carryin'? Wot would 'ave happened then, eh?"

"I'm sure I'm very sorry", said Percy. But Mr. Gromm hadn't done with him yet.

"You didn't pause for to reflect upon that, did you? Eh? You were in too much of a 'urry fer that."

Again Percy felt a restraining hand on his forearm.

"I'll tell yer what's your trouble, Percy. Yer *always* in too much of a 'urry. Now don't get fidgetin' off. I'm telling yer this because it's something as I want to larn yer, partikler. Take yer time, Percy. You was born in too much of a 'urry—didn't yer Ma never tell yer about that?"

"Mother died 'fore I was school-age."

"Well, it's true", he said, holding Percy's arm and working it up and down as he spoke. "You be come into the world in a 'urry and now yer a young man in a 'urry. I'll be caddled if you

ain't". He chuckled, and moved off with measured step towards the well.

Percy picked up his bicycle. Silly old jobbernowl, he thought, as he raced along. Just because he's known me ever since I was a child, thinks he's got the right to talk to me like a school-teacher, now I'm twenty.

Bother these old dummies out of the ark, he thought. Can't they imagine that things is changing and even Edgerly'll be changed in ten years? They want folks like me as can move a bit fast, and they'll be respecting me for it one day. Only I shan't wait for that—I shall be off on some good job, running me own garage somewhere by then. Now I wonder has that paper come yet and whether I'll 'ave got a prize? That's all I want, just a little money to start me off.

Percy was always in a hurry, on Friday evenings, to get home from the motor works where he worked, because Friday evening brought his copy of the *Live Wire*, and every week this paper ran a phrase-making competition, for which Percy always entered.

He stood to make £500 out of this competition any week. Probably it would be soon, but certainly it must come eventually. Then he was always going in for other competitions and lucky draws. That brought the odds down still further.

He flung the bicycle against the bank and jumped up, scorning the steps. Percy's parents had died when he was young, and ever since he had lived with Mr. and Mrs. Feather and their son Amos, who kept the one village shop.

"Hullo, Amos", he said, pushing the door open so sharply that the old clapper bell rang madly: "Post come all right?"

"Here it be then, Mister Live Wire", said Amos, throwing him the orange coloured packet. Percy quickly tore it open and turned to the competition page.

"Well", he said, after a few seconds, "no luck this time—gone to a post office worker at Birmingham this week. I bet that'll be

some mud-headed old fool who don't know how to use the money."

"Well, there's another of your sixpences fooled away", said Amos, who was a good ten years older than Percy; a gentle, dark-faced fellow who spoke very seldom, and very quietly when he did speak.

"Oh, shut that, Amos", said Percy, "You're as bad as old Gromm you are, and how do you know I haven't won one of the small prizes. *As* it happens I have, there you are. Ten shillings—now who's wasted sixpence? Eh?"

Percy felt triumphant and excited. It was an omen. He called old Mr. and Mrs. Feather in from the garden and astonished them with the news. As he ate his tea he told them of his ideas for getting on, of the main road garage he would be running one day, and who knows what that might not lead to? He talked very fast.

After tea he insisted on Amos coming down to the pub to see a few fellows and celebrate his win. Amos came reluctantly; he preferred his garden. Percy was rather annoyed to find Gromm and a number of older men in the bar parlour. As he was telling them the news they heard a car outside and in another moment a stranger stepped in—a brisk gentleman in the forties, apparently.

The assembled company had hardly taken him well in when they found he was addressing them with rapid speech.

"Good evening, gentlemen", he said, "My name's Captain Whitaker, and I'm helping to organise a kind of lucky draw to help the Cottage Hospital at Overleigh. We have to run it in the form of a competition so as not to come up against the lottery laws. The first prize is a thousand pounds, and this is what'll interest you. The entries are confined to members of the county, so you see it's bound to go to a county man. We aim to get another thousand for the hospital beyond the prize money, and there are only a few more tickets to go. Who's on?"

Percy felt his heart jump into his throat—a thousand pounds!

This must be the very reason why he had felt so certain that ten bob was an omen. As he stared at the beer ringed table, the yellow panels and the red faces round him, he had a curious feeling. They all bulged and leaned towards him with a heavy insistence. He was going to win that thousand pounds. He knew it. The excitement of the evening spun round this point.

"Here you are, sir", he said, "I'll 'ave a ticket, I'll 'ave *two* and make certain."

"Good man", said Captain Whitaker and began to tear them out of a book.

"I'll tell you what, Amos", said Percy, "you take one of them tickets and we'll make a bargain to share the winnings if either strikes lucky—see?"

"Well I doan' know——"

"Oh, come on", said Percy, "do fer once 'ave a little gumption. Don't you *want* a thousand pounds?"

"Oh, all right", said Amos, looking lugubrious, "I'll take one. It's a bond then."

The other men in the room seemed hardly to have grasped the Captain's drift. They watched him steadily as he tore out the coupons and explained the competition to Percy.

"Wait a minute", said Mr. Gromm, "'*Ow* much did yer say these tickets were?"

A chorus of "Ahs" and nods ran round the parlour as if Mr. Gromm had found words for something the others had been unable to formulate.

"Five bob each."

There was a silence, then Mr. Gromm spoke again as if for the whole company.

"No thank yer", he said, "I ain't go no five bobs to go chuckin' away, even if others have. Times be middlin' 'ard for that kind o' *rashness*."

A new shifting of legs and elbows expressed a plain forthright

assent to this, and Mr. Gromm, gathering way, shook his bearded face and was heard to mutter: "Foolishness if you ask me, all them 'ere sweeps and draws as seems to be all the go"——

"Well", said the Captain, cheerfully, cutting him short," you're certainly at liberty to think what you please, and there's no obligation. As a matter of fact we've really raised the money that we set out to get. We judge next week and we'll let the winner know by post on Friday. We shan't have the results in any paper."

Again Percy's heart jumped. Only a week to wait then.

"Well, I hope one of your enterprising young fellows wins it", said the Captain, and he was gone.

"That be a fine thing to do with ten bob", Gromm said at length, so that the whole room could hear. "You take it from me no good never come out of tossing yer money about like so much 'ay. No good carn't come out of them lotteries and lucky dips, my lad, No good carn't come——"

"Ain't it my business?" said Percy, and he rushed out of the room and struck out into the quiet coloured May evening to try and walk it off.

Fed up he was with all their fatheaded nagging and niggling on in the same way that they always had done. Because it always had been, then it must be right, and old Gromm lecturing him like any schoolboy in front of half the village. Of course he was in a hurry and that was more than any of them ever had the sharpness to be. The soil was in their bloomin' heads that's what the trouble was, generations of it, and they wouldn't think or move much different to a clod of earth.

Their ways annoyed him. Their thoughts annoyed him. Their drawling old country speech annoyed him—he was learning to speak as if he didn't come from the back end of nowhere, why couldn't they?

And Amos would be as bad as any of them if he didn't look

out. Though he had more regard for Amos than anyone. Amos was a fine chap and a brainy chap too, but why wouldn't he raise a bit more go and gumption? Time and again Percy had pointed out to Amos that as the town crept out towards the villages, and the workers at the motor factory, many of them, now lived nearer to Edgerly than to town shops, Amos had a big custom waiting for him, if only he'd look alive and stock a bit more and go after them. Oh, he fairly wanted to take Amos and kick some more up-to-date ideas into him. It made him quite frantic.

And then to have that hairy old mommet of a Gromm sneer at him, the scrimping old muckworm, what right had he? He couldn't stand it much longer. He'd walk his chalks and clear out of the village.

He thought suddenly of the Hospital Competition and of the curious sensation he had had in the bar parlour. Yes, he still felt the same. Something was going to come of it. And he felt glad that Amos was in it too; it would be a bond of brotherhood between them. Through it he'd win Amos to his ways of thinking, get him out of the old dead and alive ruts and they'd do big things together. And in only a week the news would be out. It would come in a letter on Friday. He was trembling with excitement when he got home.

So Percy's thoughts ran on all the week, wove themselves into the rhythm of the machines at the shops, raced in his head as he pedalled home from the works in the still, cool evening.

But on Thursday evening he found the suspense almost unbearable. He drifted out for a walk after tea and finished up at the pub. When he passed Gromm he almost felt a sense of triumph at what was coming. As he got inside the bar a friend said to the landlord:

"'Ullo, here *is* Percy; now be that right wot you were telling us?"

"Right enough", the landlord answered, "sure as I'm drawing

yer a pint o' brown ale now. There was a young feller in 'ere an hour ago from Edgminster, said as 'ow he couldn't say nothing definite, but there was a rumour as an Edgerly man had won that 'ere 'ospital draw."

Percy clasped his head between his hands and tried to keep calm. It *was* him or Amos then. They were the only people in Edgerly who had tickets. He told himself to think no more about it and wandered out again.

There was no early post in Edgerly, so Percy had to be content to go off to work next morning without news.

When he got back, there was his weekly *Live Wire* as usual, and another letter. He picked it up with pulsing heart. It was addressed to Amos in typescript. Percy glanced heedlessly through his paper. There was no prize for him in that. He could hardly resist opening the letter.

Then Amos came in.

"There's a letter for you, Amos", said Percy.

"Oh", said Amos. "For me—whoever's sent *me* a letter?"

"Look and see, I should."

Amos opened the latter and read it very slowly. An expression of faint surprise crossed his eyes, then very quickly he glanced at Percy and put the letter in his pocket. He turned away.

"Is there anything—anything in it?" said Percy.

"No", said Amos, and went into the kitchen and shut the door. Percy could hear him talking in a low voice to his father.

Percy waited some time quite numb and dizzy with shock. What the hell did it mean? Why couldn't Amos tell him the news. Did he want to conceal it? Then a dreadful idea crossed his mind: supposing Amos did want to conceal it, so as to keep all the money for himself. He had no idea that Percy had already heard the rumour. And the Captain had said the draw was not to be published.

Percy wandered moodily out of the shop door and up the

village street, his chin sunk on his chest. Then from the distance he saw Amos run out of the cottage, pick up his own bike that was lying on the bank and ride off.

Percy walked on and found himself at the pub again. He sat down silently.

"Let's 'ave a beer", he said, and after a bit, "Sure that was right what you told me last night?"

"Sure as I'm standing here", said the landlord. "And there's two or three of 'em been in to Edgminster to-day and say they 'eerd the same thing theyselves. 'Aven't you 'eerd nothing, then?"

"Not a thing", said Percy, "at least. . . ."

He never meant to talk about it, but it had been all pent up inside him for days now, and as he had another beer and then another the whole story came out.

"That ain't fair, then", they were saying. "Why, 'e agreed to share it with you in this very room. I 'eerd 'im with my own ears."

"That Amos always were a silent one. You watch him—they silent ones. . . ."

An hour passed; and another. Time and again they thrashed it out. Percy drank and drank, and when he plunged out it was dark and his head was whirling.

The loathsome meanness of it sickened him. To think that he had been looking forward to sharing this with Amos, helping him to do something a bit better, and it was his by right, and now the scroungy little muckworm eaten up by stinking mean-minded greed to grasp every penny as if it was his ticket for Heaven—

A bicycle lamp flashed in front of him, shone in his face, and there was Amos on his own bicycle.

"Hi!" shouted Percy, and caught Amos by the arm, almost knocking him over.

"Mind out; you'll have me over", said Amos. "What the hell

are you playing at?"

"Who said you could take my bike?" said Percy.

"What's up with you?"

"Where's that money of mine?"

"Don't be a bloody fool", said Amos, "You be drunk. Get home at once."

He tried to move on, but Percy pulled the bicycle away. Amos pushed him aside pretty hard, and Percy fell down on the road. He at once got up, swearing filthily, all the tension of the week breaking out, and hit Amos as hard as he could in the face. Amos reeled back, tripped over the ditch and fell heavily through the wooden paling round Mr. Gromm's front garden. It broke with a splintering crash. Amos caught at some ricketty poles covered with ramblers and pulled them down with him. Instantly a dozen dogs began barking madly and leaping at the ends of their chains. Doors were flung open and people shouted. Amos got up festooned with brambles and spitting a tooth out of his mouth. Then he snarled like an animal and rushed at Percy.

They closed and swayed in the darkness, and fell headlong into the ditch clawing and pounding at each other. One of them was bleeding violently from the nose, but neither knew or cared which. Collars were torn off and faces punched and ground into the earth.

When they were hauled out of the ditch, there was a ring of people round them. Shafts of light flowed out of the cottage doors and everybody moved with huge grotesque shadows. To Percy it was all half-realised and nightmarish. Mr. Gromm was in the middle of the group.

"Hi, you two", he said, "Percy—Amos, whatever be arl this about, you young nineters, you?"

"It's 'im", Percy shouted. "Wants to sneak off with that five 'undred quid 'e won in the 'ospital draw."

"I never won the 'ospital draw."

"Yes, you did, you did", yelled Percy. "Then what was in that letter you 'ad?"

"It wur a price list of some tinned fruits for our stock, if yer want to know, and I 'ad to catch the post to-night with an order."

"I don't believe yer—I don't——"

"Now stop yer clapperclawin', yer blasted young fool", said Mr. Gromm. "Amos never won that."

"'Ow do you know?"

"'Cause I be won it meself, then."

"What!" said everybody. "Mr. Gromm! You been mighty quiet about it. You took a ticket after arl. Well, there!"

"Yes", said Mr. Gromm. "So 'appened I met that Captain Whitaker next day in Edgminster, and 'e tarked me round to take a ticket along of two young cockerels, as I sold 'im."

"Well", said Percy, as this new grievance bore in on him. "Of all the unfair—"

He broke away and was going off by himself, when he felt a hand on his arm. It was Gromm.

"'Ere, Percy my lad. Come into my 'ouse. I want to tark to yer."

Inside the cottage kitchen Gromm made him sit down.

"Now keep quiet fur a few minutes", he said. "I be going to make a good cup of tea."

He busied himself with the kettle and tea canister, and Percy was thankful to sit silent, where no one could see him. Mr. Gromm reminded him of Adam somehow—everybody's forefather. His twisted hands were the colour of earth itself. You could hardly see his face for hair. He still kept his shapeless hat on his head.

Old Gromm had got the better of him then. It was only luck, of course, but somehow it seemed to prove Percy wrong in everything. Gromm gave him a cup of potent brew, took one himself, sat down and said, very slowly, as he cut off some plug tobacco, rolled it up and lit his pipe,

"Didn't I tell yer no good couldn't come along of this? Now yer see."

Percy sighed. It was all right for Gromm.

"But that thur wasn't wot I want ter say. Supposin' you *'ad* won, wot then? I don't 'old with this easy come money. I'm in two minds to give the 'ole stook of it back to the 'ospital. Money's a thing as yer 'as to take yer time with to my way of thart. As the years go on, bits o' things stick to yer. But you 'as to take yer time, and do it fer yerself."

"Now I always said about you, as yer'd be lucky if yer ever got a fiftieth part o' what yer thart to get. Been saying that for years, I 'ave. Now what do you figure a fiftieth part o' this thousand pounds to be?"

"Twenty pounds", said Percy.

Mr. Gromm rose and went to a cupboard.

"Well", he said, "take this twenty pounds, Percy. The captain brart it me in banknotes along of the news a couple of hours back."

"What", said Percy, unable to believe his ears. "For me: but look 'ere, Mr. Gromm——"

He was cut short every time he tried to express his thanks. After he had said good-night, Mr. Gromm stood at the window and watched him walk slowly down the road.

Percy was amazed as much at having the money at all, as at the way it came. He held the notes in his hand inside his breast pocket. Twenty pounds was not as much as a thousand, but it was a lot. He had never had so much money in his life. A thousand pounds was too much to expect. But this twenty pounds was real, solid. It was *possessions*.

He had an impulse to run home at top speed and give the whole lot to Amos. Then he thought he could make it up with Amos without that. Amos had the shop and the house coming to him. Then what should he do with it? He would buy a motor bike.

No, he would take evening classes. No, he would take a holiday in London. That might lead to some new job.

Percy walked more and more slowly. Eventually he came to a standstill, and let the night air fan his face while he gazed up at the stars. It was very still. Somewhere an owl was hooting, and there was a sound of murmured voices behind a lighted window. He felt the age-old life of Edgerly lap quietly round him. The beginning of the evening seemed a very long time ago. Somehow Percy felt much older than he did an hour before. Somehow now he had got the money, he did not want to do anything with it for a long while. He was in no hurry. He would just leave it for a few months—for a year or two. There was plenty of time. It was a good thing to take your time.

## *Liberty*

YOU may do what you like, nowadays.<br>
The murderer,<br>
Whose shrieking victim newly in the grave<br>
Writhes in tormented death,<br>
Is a most interesting man,<br>
Of really morbid tendencies<br>
As remarkable as Crippen<br>
Or Y or Z<br>
Whom you have read about<br>
In the newspapers.<br>
The adulterer is a most attractive man<br>
For he attracted<br>
The adulteress;<br>
What better proof<br>
Of his attraction?<br>
The liar, the slanderer<br>
Is most amusing,<br>
He'll tell you, he'll tell you<br>
All of the scandals.<br>
(Oh, do write and tell me<br>
All the new scandals.)<br>
Murder and gossip<br>
You cannot go wrong<br>
You may kill with your razor or slash with your tongue<br>
You may do what you like nowadays, nowadays.<br>
You may do what you like nowadays.

BRYAN GUINNESS

## SHERWOOD ANDERSON

# *Loom Dance*

THEY had brought a "minute man" into one of the Southern cotton mill towns. A doctor told me this story. The minute men come from the North. They are efficiency experts. The North, as every one knows, is the old home of efficiency. The minute man comes into a mill with a watch in his hand. He stands about. He is one of the fathers of "the stretch-out" system. The idea is like this—

There is a woman here who works at the looms. She is a weaver. She is taking care, let us say, of thirty looms. The question is—is she doing all she can?

It is put up to her. "If you can take care of more looms you can make more money". The workers are all paid by the "piece-work" system.

"I will stand here with this watch in my hand. You go ahead and work. Be natural. Work as you always did.

"I will watch every movement you make. I will co-ordinate your movements.

"Now you see you have stopped to gossip with another woman, another weaver.

"That time you talked for four minutes.

"Time is money, my dear."

"And you have gone to the toilet. You stayed in there seven minutes. Was that necessary? Could you not have done everything necessary in three minutes?

"Three minutes here, four minutes there. Minutes, you see, make hours and hours make cloth."

I said it was put up to her, the weaver. Well, you know how

such things are put up to employees in any factory. "I am going to try this," he says, "do you approve?"

"Sure."

What else is to be said?

There are plenty of people out of work, God knows.

You don't want to lose your job, do you?

(The boss speaking).

"Well, I asked them about it. They all approved.

"Why, I had several of them into my office. 'Is everything all right?' I asked. 'Are you perfectly satisfied about everything?'

'Sure', they all said."

It should be understood, if you do not understand, that the weaver in the modern cotton mill does not run his loom. He does not pull levers. The loom runs on and on. It is so arranged that if one of the threads among many thousand threads breaks the loom automatically stops.

It is the weaver's job then to spring forward. The broken thread must be found. Down inside the loom there are little steel fingers that grasp the threads. The ends of the broken thread must be found and passed through the finger that is to hold just that thread. The weaver's knot must be tied. It is a swiftly made, hard little knot. It will not show in the finished cloth. The loom may run for a long time and no thread break and then, in a minute, threads may break in several looms.

The looms in the weaving rooms are arranged in long rows. The weaver passes up and down. Nowdays, in modern mills, she does not have to change the bobbins. The bobbins are automatically fed into the loom. When a bobbin has become empty it falls out and a new one takes its place. A full cylinder of bobbins is up there atop the loom. The full bobbins fall into their places as loaded cartridges fall into place when a revolver is fired.

So there is the weaver. All she, or he, has to do is to walk up and down. Let us say that twenty or thirty looms are to be watched. The looms are of about the breadth of an ordinary writing desk or the chest of drawers standing in your bedroom.

You walk past twenty or thirty of them, keeping your eyes open. They are all in rapid motion, dancing. You must be on the alert. You are like a school teacher watching a group of children.

But these looms, these children of the weaver, do not stand still. They dance in their places. There is a play of light from the factory windows and from the white cloth against the dark frames of the looms.

Belts are flying. Wheels are turning.

The threads—often hundreds to the inch—lie closely in the loom, a little steel finger holding each thread. The bobbin flies across, putting in the cross threads. It flies so rapidly the eye cannot see it.

That is a dance too.

The loom itself seems to jump off the floor. There is a quick jerky movement, a clatter. The loom is setting each cross thread firmly in place, making firm smooth cloth.

The dance of the looms is a crazy dance. It is jerky, abrupt, mechanical. It would be interesting to see some dancer do a loom dance on the stage. A new kind of music would have to be found for it.

There are fifteen looms dancing, twenty, thirty, forty. Lights are dancing over the looms. There is always, day and every day, this strange jerky movement, infinitely complex. The noise in the room is terrific.

The job of the minute man is to watch the operator. This woman has too many false movements. "Do it like this."

The thing is to study the movements, not only of the weavers but of the machines. The thing is to more perfectly co-ordinate the two.

It is called by the weavers "the stretch-out."

It is possible by careful study, by watching an operator (a weaver) hour after hour, standing with watch in hand, following the weaver up and down, to increase the efficiency by as much as a hundred per cent. It has been done.

Instead of thirty-six looms let us say seventy-two. Something gained, eh? Every other operator replaced.

Let us say a woman weaver makes twelve dollars a week. Let her make sixteen. That will be better for her.

You still have eight dollars gained.

What about the operator replaced? What of her?

But you cannot think too much of that if you are to follow modern industry. To every factory new machines are coming. They all throw workmen out of work. That is the whole point. The best brains in America are engaged in that. They are making more and more complex strange and wonderful machines that throw people out of work.

They don't do it for that reason. The mill owner doesn't buy for that reason. To think of mill owners as brutes is just nonsense. They have as much chance to stop what is going on as you have.

What is going on is the most exciting thing in modern life. Modern industry is a river in flood, it is a flow of refined power.

It is a dance.

The minute man the doctor told me about made a mistake. He was holding his watch on the wrong woman.

She had been compelled to go to the toilet and he followed her to the door and stood there, watch in hand.

It happened that the woman had a husband also a weaver, working in the same room.

He stood watching the man who was holding the watch on his

wife in there. His looms were dancing, the loom dance.

And then suddenly he began to dance. He hopped up and down in an absurd jerky way. Cries, queer, seemingly meaningless cries, came from his throat.

He danced for a moment like that and then he sprang. He knocked the minute man down. Other weavers, men and women, came running. Now they were all dancing up and down. Cries were coming from many throats.

The weaver, who was the husband of the woman back of the door, had knocked the minute man down and now was dancing upon his body. He kept making queer sounds. He may have been trying to make the music for the new loom dance.

The minute man from the North was not a large man. He was slender and had blue eyes and light curly hair and wore glasses.

The glasses had fallen on the floor.

His watch had fallen on the floor.

All the looms in the room kept running.

Lights danced in the room.

The looms kept dancing.

A weaver was dancing on a minute man's watch.

A weaver was dancing on a minute man's glasses.

Other weavers kept coming.

They came running. Men and women came from the spinning room.

There were more cries.

There was music in the mill.

And really you must get into your picture the woman—in there.

We can't leave her out.

She would be trying, nervously, to arrange her clothes. She would have heard her husband's cries.

She would be dancing, grotesquely, in a confined place.

In all the mills the women and girls hate more than anything else being watched when they go to the toilet.

They speak of that among themselves. They hate it more than they hate long hours and low wages.

There is a kind of deep human humiliation in that.

It leaves a man or woman flat, takes from him, as nothing else does, his manhood, her womanhood.

There is this secret part of me, this secret function, the waste of my body being eliminated. We do not speak of that. It is done secretly.

We must all do it and all know we must all do it. Rightly seen it is but a part of our relations with nature.

Dust to dust.

Earth to earth.

Ashes to ashes.

This fish back into the sea from which it came.

But we civilised people are no longer a part of nature. We live in houses. We go into factories.

These may be a part of nature too. We are trying to adjust ourselves. Give us time.

You—do not stand outside of this door, to this little room, holding a watch in your hand, when I go in here.

There are some things in this world, even in our modern mass production world, not permitted.

There are things that will make a weaver dance the crazy dance of the looms.

There was a minute man who wanted to co-ordinate the movements of weavers to the movements of machines.

He did it.

The legs of weavers became hard and stiff like legs of looms.

There was an intense up and down movement. Cries arose from many throats. They blended strangely with the clatter of looms.

As for the minute man, some other men, foremen, superintendents and the like, got him out of there. They dragged him out at a side door and into a mill yard. The yard became filled with dancing shouting men, women and girls. They got him into another machine, an automobile, and hurried him away. They patched him up. The doctor who patched him up told me the story.

He had some ribs broken and was badly bruised but he lived all right. He did not go back into the mill.

The stretch-out system was dropped in that mill in the South. The loom dance of the weavers stopped it that time.

## *Triolet*

COLD was the way as on I strode,
And steel-shod boots struck fire
From hard flint stones upon the road.
Cold was the way as on I strode
And dark the night, and great my load
Of grief, for want of my desire.
Cold was the way as on I strode,
And steel-shod boots struck fire.

J. A. PARK

HENRY CHESTER TRACY

# *Dilemma*

WESTERN man: his power, his impatience, his blindness, his arrogance toward the unseen, his belief in himself, his endless ignorance of himself, his restlessness and his need for rest —how, short of death, shall he solve his mortal dilemma!

He does not solve it. He dies, first scattering those fecund parts of himself that breed more of him and of his kind, as the parts of the sky-god were scattered by Kronos, to breed furies and giants on the earth. He dies of unfulfilment. The life that is in him cannot complete itself, and so be at peace. The peace that is in him cannot fructify and incarnate a life. All that is beyond him, and he performs great deeds, pushes knowledge to its limits and fits this planet for a non-existent race. Discerning persons step aside when he approaches and seek for some sanctuary that he cannot "improve."

This is rhetorical language, and the figures are unpleasant figures. There is no "Western man." There are individuals, variously absorbed and obliterated into sport, commerce, fighting and government, or into the professions, and there is incoherent Mass. Out of this organised and sacrificial life of functions, or out of this incoherence, the problem is to imagine a self: one that shall stand, in some portion of his time, outside the mêlée of his engagements and say, This I know, and experience and am. Who can assume, for purposes of deposition, this role of consciousness? If anyone can, let him typify, in his own person, this difficult hypostasis. Can any do it? Can it be done? Personal consciousness cannot be appraised in another but, if it could be judged and rated, whom would we select for the norm? Great men are often departures from the type. By their bias and concentration on one thing they correct error or the staleness of use. But we

shall not select any one name out of the Pantheon of great names, for the days of hero-worship are long past. We shall prefer, if we can find it, a figure out of common life, neither greatly gifted nor under-endowed. Because his significance, if we can state it, will be pertinent to our own self.

It should be, one hazards, the business of novelists, or at least a fiction writer, here and there, to select such a figure and bring out his significance. But now we say, by and large, that the novelist fails. Either the common figure eludes him, or he does not attempt the thing we most need. He attempts a period or a blight, an incoherence, a fungoid affliction on humanity. In that, he succeeds. But he has failed us. He has not portrayed for us the figure we require, by knowing whom we may know and appraise ourselves. He has achieved only a caricature or a type. And from such portrayals we turn away surfeited. They compel weariness and disbelief in our kind.

This weariness may be justified. But we require a measure of belief in "our kind", as human persons—we must have the lift of it, else our progression downward is quick and sure. A several and fortuitous belief in "myself", among scattered individuals, will not answer. There has to be a common ground of support for this inner faith and self-honour among men. Formerly the worship of a king or a saint sufficed us. That is no more. We cannot even—as do the masses in India—pivot our self-faith on a Mahatma, a "great soul". We are beyond that. Whether backward or forward, thus far Western man has progressed. And it was innate in him, even in that vast northern wilderness from which he emerged and fell upon Europe with stone knife and neolithic tranchet, to be sufficient to himself: in all, that is to say, which pertained to his aggressive life. Where his life touched mystery and the shadows, he leaned on pagan faith—not on a priestly person. In all else he had a stout heart—his own.

This stout heart I would retrieve out of the mists of an ancient

past. No myths for me, and no heroes grown grotesque and gigantic in the mirage of prehistory, but a commonalty real, if slumberous, recognisable in some continuum which I can claim as belonging to myself. It does not lie outside of me. History, that taught me so, is false. I am cave man, dune man, man of the middens, of bronze and iron—I am proto-European man, at base, or I am nothing. I will look into my origins and derive myself a soul. I will see what can be made of this stubborn root and stock of my humanity before I condemn its effete branches—and myself with them—as worthless wood. We grafted on that ancient stock an Eastern faith and a Roman culture. The union was never perfect. Its outgrowths were insecure. Now we are sloughing off the faith and toying with the culture. We have lost our robust music (or it becomes a museum memory) and we expose ourselves to rhythms from the dark—to an autonomic music that links us with remote beginnings, older than our own off-branching from some primal Eur-African stem. It is a sign.

* * * *

There is no extant figure in fiction by which I may know and appraise myself as person and as Man. It has not been the fictionist's duty to produce him—or not yet—because it has been beyond him. The clues are too faint, or reach of them too great for his grasp. Unless I include this vastness in space and the time-stretch, I cannot know or appraise the thing that I am. Much of my life has been made into a system of denials, under a creed of the denial of self. In such a negative living there is no clear picture to be distinguished. The time-of-earth does not evoke it, nor its chemistry. What should be light is shadow, and that which should remain in shadow is being exposed. Wanting unity we disintegrate as persons, and not even the assurance of a male-self, reflected in the soul of the Amerind *kiva*, is ours. Instead we exchange opinions on academic subjects and bandy words in which

there is no racial under-lift. We are sorry caricatures of *Homo sapiens europaeus*, whom woman may hope to rule.

Such is Western man's predicament until he becomes, not "class-conscious", but worthily aware of himself—a self of such significance as can be compounded with all the ingredients that went into his making . . . since there was a world.

This is no novelist's task. It is the task of a free and thoughtful person, willing to fight his way into the unconscious and unknown—willing to find there something more than those coprophylic residues on which so inordinate a stress is being laid. The centuries have been hard, but not entirely lethal to those qualities still embedded in his *genes*, that lifted his man's gaze higher than an ape's—that bred his shoulder for the bearing of something other than the lash required by beasts.

When he knows himself, perhaps he may know woman. Till then, she is on a confused plane, competing with the self that is not the true man—that is only a set of functions, and of corresponding behaviours, ordered by accident; and that accident called "civilisation", but no longer urged as the hope of his race.

Meanwhile I get a cleaner conception of the dignity of man—of myself as a palæolithic person—by reading Osborne, or by browsing in the excellent and restrained pages of Moir's *Antiquity of Man in East Anglia*, than by suffering through the bulk of twenty books by realists, who think to show man as he is. And I say to them all, If these be your treasures, let me alone, for I elect to live in the Upper and the Lower Palæolithic. I will grow up with the Cromer Forest Bed.

## GEOFFREY WEST

# *A Philosopher of Detachment*

IT seems at once a necessity and an impertinence to apologise for writing at essay length about Henry Chester Tracy. Though he has been praised by such discriminating critics as Zona Gale, Mary Austin, Anne Douglas Sedgwick, H. S. Canby, William Allen White, Robert Nichols, and Christopher Morley, few readers seem to know of him. Yet he is so well worth knowing, and with an importance altogether beyond his simply literary standing. Ours is the Age of the Machine. Mechanism, standardisation, are our watchwords, and grateful for the gifts they bring we blind ourselves to their dangers. The fact remains that standardisation is the enemy, the death, of organic life, which is always new, always unique. It spreads a desert of potential death about us, and in a soil which will not take our roots we shrivel and grow weak. We become spiritually shallow. We are, in Tracy's own phrase, dying of thirst for experience, real experience, and yet all the while "there is an Amazon of experience all around; fresh, vital, for the taking. It requires only an attitude and a point of view". In his books he proves his contention, not only defining and expounding that attitude but demonstrating its efficacy creatively, and thereby makes of his work as authentic a fountain of new value, of new vision—of veritable new life—as almost any other now being produced in his or our country. To reject him, to pass him by, is to neglect organic life, value, experience, in a day in which they are more sorely needed than ever before.

No doubt he has contributed to his own concealment by his consistent refusal to align himself with any literary group or movement. Call him humanist, and he will accept the title; capitalise it into the controversial Humanist, and he goes to

ground at once. "If what I have to say can engage interest as spontaneous seeing and rendering of things seen, I am glad to set it down in words; but I have no gauntlets to throw down and not much concern with a set of ideas that emanates from any head living or dead". He has little regard for dialectic; his impulse is to find expression in art, and only "friends and human contacts divert this impulse and compel an effort in the direction of formulation". His written work is small in quantity and in no sense portentous, and it is his habit, moreover, to write diminishingly of himself as one concerned only with the little-watched scarcely-heard, "worthless things of the world"—birds and flowers and trees. He is indeed "a traveller in little things", no more to be neglected than Hudson, to whom he has justly been compared, while some, reckoning what they have received from him, would set him higher.

Even in his personal life he has followed the lonely path of one holding ideals neither common nor communal. He was born (let me admit at once that any account of Tracy must borrow from Zona Gale's excellent sketch) a schoolmaster's son at Athens in 1876—the Athens not of Greece but Pennsylvania. He was, however, only two years old when his father was appointed to an American school at Marsovan, in Turkey, and there on that high land ringed round by mountains, with visits to the Armenian upland lying between "the dome of Ararat on our south and the dome of Ala Goz on the north", the child spent the next ten years. His memories of this period he has told in *An Island in Time.* It was a world of clean, bright loveliness, wild and yet without wild life, bleak and yet productive under cultivation—the fruit and flowers grew principally within walled gardens—and the boy, growing up in it, received his most vivid impressions from streams, flowers and birds seen as fresh and immediate against a stark background of windy mountains. But with these grew up another series of impressions, of words no less living than birds

and blossoms, from hearing "great English read aloud" by his father. He was twelve when he returned—after a holiday round of visits to Greece and Italy, Switzerland and England—to Pennsylvania; a year later he entered a school and college at Oberlin, Ohio. But his parents now had gone back to Turkey, and at Oberlin "no voice read English greatly, and, missing the life of them, that boy was almost alienated from words. One man in particular, lecturing on history, intoned facts political, in voice sing-song and intonations wholly false. Another made pure history of an English course. Wandering, then, by Black River, or in woods called North, or East, or South, he sought to keep alive a spark which 'college' seemed forever determined to kill. And sometimes he set his wanderings to words. He became expert in those knowledges nearest his heart. Sciences called botany and ornithology, with allied branches, although they missed the meaning, kept at least on the borderland of what he sought. He accepted as a routine all the technique required by science; but held his soul in reserve". In that quotation appears the mature Tracy in embryo, but many years were to pass before his "words" appeared in print; he was 48 when his first book was published. He became in due course a teacher at Oberlin, but some restlessness in his spirit—its workings may be glimpsed in the story of Shoes in *The Shadow Eros*—forbade his settling to normal scholastic routine, and he set off westward. For a while he was principal in a school in Vernal, Utah; for a while he farmed there. He cut railroad trails in Montana, and yet again turned to bee-keeping for a living in Idaho. Probably it was his marriage which brought him about 1910 to the necessity for resuming his ordained career, and he obtained an appointment in California as a teacher of zoology. Presently he settled at Hollywood, when it had yet to become notorious the world over. Of later years, deserting biology for English and Nature study, he has found in the more progressive and experimental schools a compromise

between stereotyped educational methods and the creative necessities of his own being, but clearly a considerable period was passed first in the ordinary schools where his work was simply "toil" to be plodded through conscientiously but without joy, and it was not until 1925 that he could relate in print how, by a "pleasant miracle," his schoolmaster's job had "suddenly become enchanting". Until then he had had to look beyond the schools, outside Hollywood, for that recreation which was in truth his re-creation, and as in youth he had found his happiness not in the class-room but tramping the Pennsylvania and Ohio woods, lovely with hemlock and thrush-song, so now he sought it wandering alone on the mountain trails of the Californian Coast Ranges, memorable experiences of wood-visits and river-driftings.

The vital change coincided, I imagine, with his writing of *An Island in Time*, towards 1924. He seems to have reached at that time a point of crisis, of all but unbearable "psychic pressure". The ideals, the life-values, he had always instinctively clung to were in danger of succumbing to hostile environment and routine. He could not let them go; equally he could not, without the support of some objective creative expression, sustain them. The conflict grew. He was "almost in a dying condition, his energies depleted to the dregs" when he applied for leave of absence from what had become "an intolerable grind of duties". He went away, and suddenly wrote his first book in twenty days, at a stretch, in the necessity to recreate and reassert, if only for his own satisfaction, the unspoiled realities, the sources of authentic happiness, of his own boyhood in Turkey and Armenia. In doing so he discovered himself as literary artist, and the "pleasant miracle" already mentioned was but one of the psychological adjustments consequently effected, as the book itself was but the first of a series of writings.

A "great" writer Tracy may not be, if the adjective imply wide range, power, prolific production, but he does contribute some-

thing which is his own, and which is, moreover, very apt to the hour. In a period of dissolving values he comes forward to "assert a value". To those who ask what they must *do* to be saved he replies that it is perhaps more important that they should *be;* his is a gospel of life lived not as effort but as art. He has, however, no patience with esoteric views of art; he sees artistic insight —"the only mode by which the content of experience may be grasped as a unity and a value apart from want and will"—not as the privilege of the few but the heritage of all, in fact so normal and universal that "unless one participates in this kind of creative seeing, one's experience is not complete". This idea of a perception independent of want and will, seeking not advantage but beauty, and issuing not in action but mood, is fundamental to all that Tracy has written; it is identical with that of Keats's "superior being" who could declare of things that "though erroneous they may be fine". It is a philosophy of detachment by no means easy to sustain in a society based frankly upon want and will, and it is interesting in this connection that in America Tracy's work has sometimes been tagged "defeatist"—not conducive, that is, to the high doctrine of Get On or Get Under. One is glad therefore to find him facing this particular point in *Towards the Open*, and vindicating, as a trained biologist, his position as being not only a social adjunct but necessity. Almost all we value most he declares to be the product of biological leisure. "Civilisation began when things began to be more beautiful than they needed to be". With human variation in particular—and "life progresses, if at all, by means of the mutant individual"—we enter the metabiological sphere. "The social best do not survive by means of a Darwinian fitness, nor are they necessarily the finest genetic types". In one sense, admittedly, his significant man does stand outside society, self-sufficient on the plane of sheer being; yet in another and truer sense he is the very flower of society, giving freely to all of an unique blossoming, instead like the commoner weed seeking only

the power to stamp its own repeated image everywhere, acquiring and hoarding, constricting all life inward to itself. Paradoxically, he whose personality is most completely manifested is actually the most impersonal; the superior man recognises no inferiors, self-realisation is "a mode of transcending the self". He alone offers society true service, for he alone is emancipated from self-interest.

The problem is to achieve detachment in a society actively hostile to and eliminative of all that does not conform to its habits and instant needs. You cannot bestow it "by fiat, formula, or creed". "There is but one mode . . . the unforced leisure of the earth". That Tracy should find his solution in turning to that enduring background of nature from which man emerged, and which must, ultimately, absorb him and all his works as tranquilly, may be due partly to the conditions of his own upbringing, but it is more than personal idosyncrasy, it has a universal validity. It holds, at least, an "aspect of permanency" which, if nothing else, would suggest the inconsequence of the individual struggle for power in the light of ultimate ends. "Pyramids, Luxor, the Acropolis at Athens—all these are eloquent of transformation. But a forest, a mountain, carries the mind beyond change. It is here, and not among human ruins, that the eye learns to see through and beyond an ephemeral and a futile world". But in fact it goes far beyond that into the realm of positive values, as appears in a passage from an uncollected essay which though lengthy may be quoted as illustrative at once of Tracy's philosophy, his method, and his prose:—

"I value the natural forest because it clears the mind of an illusion of age and corruption, a fear and horror of decay. These things are harmonised; and against a lying logic of futility there is an eloquence of living leaves. These have their season of life and pulsation. When it closes their energies are returned to the tree; their substance, too, in a seemly manner that only a human prejudice misinterprets. There is neither death nor dreariness among sodden floorings of

winter leaves. Regret is a foreign importation. Leaf-life may, as some say, be sentient, but the plant souls are not drugged into a false heaven. They accept sunlight and they accept change and sleep. Leaf-green but sums their chemical achievement, by which they thrive without fevered running to and fro. With it they have formed a philosophy that we, their restless relatives, rarely know how to embody or use. When we do, men call us 'poets', or 'philosophers';but we have merely revived a wisdom that was extant when the first paradise was built.

"I find this wisdom walking in the arid Western hills. Here is no paradise of lofty shade-trees, springs, rivers, ferny depths; only a steep slope of rocky ground sparsely covered by a dwarf forest and strange semi-shrubs that put out small drought-resistant leaves. There are aromatic sages, and Artemisias; buckthorns, Rhus species, suffrutescent sunflowers and buckwheats, with rolled or firred leaf-blades; others waxy, hirsute or spined. I find them sufficient. They are what they are, and it contents me. I find them constant, unfevered, unaffected by excitement and change. Each leaf is adequate, and better to me than a spoken word. Beside their commonest conversation my pages seem poor . . . but I give them a page. Laurocerasus, Eriogonum, Rhus, Rhamnus, Ramona—these are some of their estimable names. How shall I present them? Not in Latin, for we are friends. I will evoke them, make them into mood. For those who will have it, they are there; drought and its acceptance; persistence against passing ills; a veiled pain-for-perfection, of infinitesimal cells; producing pattern, outlining form, adjusting plane and angle for each efficient leaf blade—all that, and a vast faithfulness to the Unknown on the part of these inconsequential small things. We are of one primal plasma, and I have pushed my head into a troublesome plane. I drop to their level for restoration, and with them, to-day, I drink eagerly of the first autumnal rain."

Here is the essential Tracy, by inclination pure nature observer and recorder, consciously intent upon the sufficient beauty of unconscious growth, and concerned not to establish a philosophy, in any ordinary meaning of the term, but to distil a mood. "I'm an impressionist, who would evoke mood by giving you the

mood-reflecting elements bodily". That is his especial literary aim, and in all his work he appears primarily as a connoisseur and conveyer of moods, his books and essays either actually "mood-bearers" (*An Island in Time* and *The Shadow Eros*), or concerned with literature generally as such (*English as Experience* and *American Naturists*), or directed to establish the value of such mood derived from "æsthetic" perception (*Towards the Open*).

He himself regards his work as possessing essential continuity as the "growth-product" of a single interest in perception, culminating in the book which is to be his next major publication. In *An Island in Time*, *The Shadow Eros*, and miscellaneous essays he has written as an artist of "those minor things which are not reckoned worthy of mention by the learned ones of the world", but in which for him lie the colour and beauty of life. *An Island in Time* (1924) caught out of the past, to save from oblivion, the remembered beauty-values of boyhood's clear perception. Not autobiography in form, it was in fact simply that; the content was real, not imagined. In *Towards the Open* (1927) he summoned the discipline and knowledge of his biological and academic training to assert such values as not only æsthetically valid but also intellectually tenable, substantial enough to be the basis of a view of life, social as well as individual. It is in the result Tracy's least characteristic book; nevertheless for those readers who are not prepared to accept his values as self-evident it provides his best introduction. In *The Shadow Eros* (1927) he returned to the mood of his first book, presenting what may be regarded as a parable of escape from this world of purpose into the naturist's realm of mood. Again it falls very close to autobiography, for those who will look below the surface, but the author's interest at least is not in any detachable meaning. If his evocation of "the unimportant things of this world"—bird and blossom and tree—cannot incite one to experience and appreciate them for their own sakes, then it has failed. (The miscellaneous essays contain some of his very

best work in this kind, but remaining uncollected cannot profitably be mentioned in any detail here.)

It is in *English as Experience* (1928) and *American Naturists* (1930) that he carries to the farthest point of demonstration his view of perception as thoroughly normal and general, even though, in an environment hostile to it, attainable only "through a deliberately chosen and actively exercised mental organisation". In the former work he exhibited in a panorama of English literature the manner in which impulse derived from such perception again and again "broke the glaze that comes on language when it becomes 'literary' and subject to scholastic techniques". In one chapter towards the end and again at length in *American Naturists* he sought to show how "a spontaneous literature of unique quality has grown up through precisely this kind of perception, emancipated from canons of form and style". Emancipated, be it noted, from *canons* of form and style only; discipline is for Tracy a constant in art, but literature succeeds only as it is organic, not contrived, expression of impulse. *English as Experience* is an attractive and highly successful attempt to exorcise the academic treatment of literature as a museum piece, a corpse whence the spirit has departed, by showing it, from Layamon to Stella Benson, vividly alive as a carrier of unique experience uniquely expressed. "Every word in the language, except as it is murdered, is alive", he has written elsewhere, and here he proves it. The result is a volume rightly described by Mary Austin as "one of the choicest books of literary criticism that has appeared in the Western Continent". *American Naturists* tacitly puts the case for "naturist" literature as a refinement upon literature generally, not, as some would suggest, a reversion to the primitive. Its hall-mark is not so much its closeness to the primal source of impulse as its complete faithfulness to mood. Subjective as mood must be, there is a real truth in the fundamentally false distinction Tracy makes: "A poet exploits moods, emotions, takes off from

a point in nature and may never return; he skims or soars because he must say the unsayable. A naturist walks on the ground". *His* qualities are directness in vision and simplicity in recording, freed from any purpose or impulsion but the simple joy of the artist in the seeing and describing. Tracy himself speaks in the true naturist's mood when he exclaims: "Must every fruit be food, every face a thing to caress, every person a thing to possess or cast away?" and replies: "This is not sight. It is molluscan motion". He writes in this book of the principal American writers in this kind (which he regards as a specifically American development) with the charm of the literature he describes. Its gift is an attitude, a perception, as relevant and immediate in all continents as in one.

In the forthcoming work, *Paths of Perception*, he is concerned with the same subject, over a wider field, and again in creative rather than critical mode. He will, in the phrases of a tentative description, "accept the obvious fact that things seen under heightened perception are incommunicable to those maimed in their seeing organ, and will devote himself to showing how a lost vision might be restored. He will show why it is that a certain reality can be claimed for the vision of things as perceived in detachment, and make a plea for personal emancipation from those obsessions and encumbrances that litter most minds. Granted a hostile civilisation all about us, he will seek to rescue (for the discerning) values that remain when all that can be spoiled by man is spoiled. And he will show that such a consummation is already on its way". It is a book likely, in its clarity of statement and creative power, one may believe, to establish his position in America; if in England publishers still decline to waken to his significance, it is to be hoped at least that a few intelligent readers may be directed to his work by this present article.

At best it has been but an outline. A longer essay might have related his work to the modern metabiological position, to current Humanism and philosophy generally, might have shown its

immediate relevance to æsthetic theory and in particular the views of I. A. Richards and his school. Space has prevented my even touching these points, and I don't know that he will regret it, for he says: "I suspect these impressive valuations". Rather would I write of him as one who can give, to those who will receive him, new beauty, new happiness, new life. First and last he is that, a life-giver. To read him—even for one by nature dull, sluggish, slow to be stirred—is for a while at least to share his vision, to discover in scenes drearily familiar a new loveliness dancing in the air like haze over a hay-field when the summer sun is strong. Habit takes one again, perhaps, but the assurance remains that here *is* life, experience, value, sufficient in its own beauty, not fleeting but permanent if one could but find the gateway to it. Tracy, in his books, persuades one that one can. He does more—he holds out the key.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:—Only one of Henry Chester Tracy's books has been published in Great Britain—*Towards the Open* (Chatto & Windus, 1927)—and this is, I understand, now out of print. For the convenience of readers therefore I append a complete list of the volumes, with American publishers and prices:—

*An Island in Time.* Yale University Press, 1924. $1.50.
*Towards the Open.* E. P. Dutton, 1927. $3.50.
*The Shadow Eros.* E. P. Dutton, 1927. $2.00.
*English as Experience.* E. P. Dutton, 1928. $2.50.
*American Naturists.* E. P. Dutton, 1930. $3.90.

G. W.

DESMOND O'BRIEN

# *Malcolm and Margaretta*

MALCOLM reflected that it could not have been a better day for the picnic. The sun lay across the room in the shape of a distorted diamond as it came in diagonally through the window; outside, Malcolm could hear the wind in the trees like the breaking of surf, and from a distance there came the staccato piping of a bird and the monotonous clucking of hens.

As he changed from his school clothes into flannels, the dishes clattered cheerfully in the room below where his mother was preparing their midday meal. In a few moments she called to him: Would Margaretta like cucumber sandwiches? He wasn't sure, but he thought she would.

Margaretta! He said the name quietly to himself, trying to imagine her as he had last seen her, but it was only her face he could see clearly; the background was vague and blurred. Her hair like a golden light framed her face, and her eyes looked at him shyly: they were a mixture of gold and green and seemed like two pools of sunshine in a wood. And this afternoon he was going to tell her that he loved her.

He paused in the lacing of his shoes as he tried to imagine the telling. It would be so easy. Perhaps when they had had tea he would tell her, or when they were in the boat drifting homewards. "Margaretta", he would say, "I love you. I have loved you ever since I met you at the school dance". Her eyes would grow soft, she would smile, and put her hand in his, making him want to cry from happiness. Or he would read the poem he had written for her, and she would know as he read it that he loved her and thought her beautiful. Then they would tether the boat to a tree while they wandered through the woods, when, perhaps, she

would let him kiss her just to show that she returned his love.

For a few moments he wondered whether Margaretta would understand when he spoke of love—she was only fifteen, younger than he by two months, and even he had not known real love until he had met her; but then he had known in a flash of wonder all that love meant. It made him think all day of the things he could do to show that he loved her and to make her think well of him; it made him want to lie in a sunlit field listening to distant sounds that distance made unreal, with nothing to do but think how beautiful it was to be in love.

"Lunch is ready", his mother called from downstairs.

"All right", he replied; "I'm coming down now."

He hurried to finish dressing, but hesitated as he drew his tie up to his collar. Margaretta, he remembered, had told him that her favourite colour was blue. Going to a drawer he found an old blue silk tie which he had not worn for a long time. By tying it low down he found that it would hide the shabby patch where the knot would come in the ordinary way, so he discarded his red and black school tie and replaced it with the blue. Then, slipping on his jacket, he went down to the dining room.

"It's going to be a lovely afternoon for you", Mrs. Turner said. "The basket's all ready packed, and I've filled the thermos flask. I didn't put sugar in though as Margaretta might not take it in tea."

"Did you put in the fruit?" asked Malcolm. "And do you think we might have two of those lace napkins that you keep in the sideboard drawer?"

"I've put two in, and a small teacloth as well. Don't you worry —everything's very dainty."

She watched him sadly as he ate the food in front of him. She was trying so hard not to be jealous. Even his request for her best tea napkins had a slight sting in it. Never before had she felt that he wanted anyone more than her, but now his talk was

always of Margaretta. Besides he seemed so young, too young to feel any love other than the love she had given him all his life.

"Is she a nice girl, Malcolm?" she asked.

"Why, yes. I'm sure you'd like her, and you know I wouldn't be taking her out if she were not nice. She's different from other girls, too."

"But you haven't known any other girls properly."

"Perhaps not, but the fellows at school tell you about the girls they know and she's not a bit like them. She's not a girl that you'd tell other fellows about, because—well, just because she's different."

A dull pain came into Mrs. Turner's throat as she listened to Malcolm's warm praise of Margaretta, and she kept saying to herself—"No, I must not be jealous. It is wrong of me to be jealous". And in her heart she prayed that Margaretta would be no less sweet than his idealised conception of her.

"You'll be careful on the river, won't you?"

"We'll be all right. Besides, I can swim."

"Yes, dear, I know you can, but the river's so full of treacherous currents."

"I'll take care," he reassured her, kissing her lightly on the cheek as he passed on his way out.

"Ask her to tea sometime if you like," Mrs. Turner called after him.

"Oh, may I?" he said, eagerly. "Thanks. Good-bye."

* * * * *

Malcolm arrived at the boathouse twenty minutes before the time he had arranged with Margaretta, and finding a seat facing the river, he sat down to await her coming. The river was gay with boats and small steamers, and occasionally he could hear coming from them as they passed by a happy laugh or the murmur of voices.

Now that the time for meeting Margaretta again was so close,

he began to feel nervous; his heart was beating rapidly, his breath seemed to tremble, and he felt that in his shyness he would forget most of the things he wanted to say. The crackling of paper in his pocket reminded him of his poem and of the plans he had made. First of all he was going to row hard until they were far up the river, and then turn into a quiet side stream he knew where the trees hung like a veil over the water. He would light a cigarette, and they would talk of——

"Hello, Malcolm."

He turned quickly as he heard the whisper behind him, and in his surprise forgot the courteous and rather elegant greeting he had thought out.

"Margaretta! Why, you are early, too."

How sweet and beautiful she was, how slender and lovely. As she stood slightly above him on the rising bank of the river, her pale-blue frock outlined against the green background of the boathouse, she seemed to him like a flower, and he remained still, absorbing the clean atmosphere of her, almost unable to speak.

"Are we going up the river?" she asked.

"Of course", Malcolm said; "I was taking that for granted."

A boat was brought round to the landing-stage, and in the stern Malcolm placed the picnic basket and two cushions for Margaretta. As he helped her into the boat, the touch of her hand sent a curious shock through him that seemed to stop for a few moments his breathing and the beating of his heart. He followed her shakily into the boat, and pushing off from the stage, pulled out into the river.

Neither of them spoke until they had passed round the first bend, which shut away the bustle of the many moorings and boathouses. Through the water, the boat moved smoothly, leaving behind it a series of spirals golden in the sun. Across the sky, light clouds were drifting slowly, and the slight wind that Malcolm had noticed earlier on had dropped until it was no more

than a soft, warm breath that dabbled his face and arms.

As he rowed steadily, Malcolm knew that Margaretta was watching him, and a wave of warmth crept over the whole of his body.

"You're very quiet," Margaretta said. "What are you thinking about?"

"I was thinking it was good of you to come", he replied. "I was almost afraid that you wouldn't turn up."

"Why?"

"Oh, I don't know. I suppose I felt it was too wonderful for us to be together, and I was afraid something would prevent it from happening. Even now I can hardly believe it."

He looked across at her as she lay against the cushions, trying to make an indelible picture of her in his memory. The sun shone on to her, tinting with gold the loose wisps of hair ruffled by the breeze until they looked of a spider-spun softness. One hand she trailed in the water, watching the sinuous coils it left in its wake, and Malcolm thought how much he would like to hold her hand when it was wet and cool. Suddenly, alarmed, he wondered again if she knew what love was, and whether she would understand why he wanted to hold her hand in his. Yet, if she had not known love, but had been troubled as he had been with a strange disquiet, it would be so sweet a thing to reveal it to her. And the thought of disclosing love to her made her seem even more holy.

"This is the first time we've been really by ourselves", Margaretta said, not looking at him but staring into the water.

"I know. Are you glad you came?"

"Rather. It was awfully decent of you to ask me."

"I wanted to tell you something", said Malcolm.

"To tell me something?" she questioned. "No, don't tell me—let me guess."

She pursed her mouth, and a slight frown puckered her brow.

"I know", she cried. "You are leaving school?"

He shook his head, and leaned forward on his oars, resting for a while.

"No. It's much more important than that."

Again she frowned; and as she thought, she tied and untied little knots in the corner of her handkerchief.

"Promise you'll tell me if I guess right?" she demanded.

"You won't ever guess this."

"I give it up then. What is it?"

"I'll tell you after tea", he said; but as he promised he doubted his courage to tell her. At night, as he had lain in bed waiting for sleep, it had seemed simple enough, but her presence made it a fearsome undertaking.

They were reaching tree-shadowed waters, and the shadows trembled as they were caught in the wash of the boat; on either side, the woods looked deep, and quiet with a sacred quietness. Malcolm pulled the boat into a narrow sidestream, and rowed sturdily against the swift current for half an hour; then he ran the boat to the bank, where, after catching at an overhanging branch, he twisted the tow-rope round a tree and made it fast.

"Oh, Malcolm, this is beautiful, isn't it?"

He nodded as he stood up. "But never quite so beautiful before as it is now", he said, clumsily, wondering if she would realise what he meant. "Mind how you get out. It's frightfully deep here."

He was tired after rowing for so long, and it was pleasant to sit there with Margaretta on the grass mottled with the shadows of leaves, listening to the lapping of water under their boat. But absorbed as he was in the beauty of it all, he could not help thinking of how he was going to open his mind to Margaretta, and tell her how her presence made everything seem more lovely. And then, as another thought occurred to him, he said: "I say, you—you haven't been out with any of the other fellows, have you?"

"Why do you ask me that?"

He looked down into the long grass, and twined his fingers in it before he replied.

"It would make things rather different if you had", he said, slowly.

"How different, Malcolm?" she asked.

"I can't quite say", he said. But he knew that had she been out with Carey or Tomkinson or any of the chaps at school it would have taken away much of the loveliness. He did not care to think of her as being like other girls, nor did he like even to think of her having to do the everyday tasks common to every girl; and he wished that by some miracle he could enclose her in a shrine which would keep her from all the coarse accidents of life that might sully her. It was a curious feeling, and he could not think why he wanted to do that with her. He felt, too, that he wanted to grow prodigiously strong and big so that he could engulf her in his own body, blending her body into his.

"No. I've never been out with a boy before", she said.

"Not anywhere?"

She shook her head and smiled at him.

"Why haven't you?" he asked.

"I haven't wanted to."

"Neither have I been out with a girl before—nor wanted to go out with one. But you——"

He trailed out into silence, and stared into the thickness of the trees. He had not the courage to tell her of his love; each time he had begun he had stopped quickly, afraid to go on. If only there were some excuse for holding her in his arms, or for touching her hand, it would help him; and he knew that once he began the words would come tumbling out until she knew all.

He imagined many things that would send her to his arms—wild, improbable things. He wanted to fight for her, to save her from danger; he almost wished she would fall in the river so that

he could rescue her——to fall in the river so that——

"Malcolm. What's the matter? You looked so strange for a minute."

"Did I?" he said, and laughed, nervously. "I'm sorry. Let's have tea, shall we?"

He unloaded the basket, passing to her, one by one, cups and saucers, plates and parcels of sandwiches. He watched her as she set them on the cloth, delighting in the slow grace of her movements.

During tea he ate little, and sat listening to her talk of school, of games and lessons and of mistresses. He decided he could not read his poem to her; poetry did not seem right in the open, and in bright daylight: it was for the night, for the moon, for still rooms.

"It's going to rain, I think", Margaretta said, looking up through the trees.

Heavy climbing clouds had formed, and were chained across the sky, casting bulging shadows that floated over the ground beneath; the sun had paled and its wan light tinged with yellow the outlines of the trees.

"I hope not," Malcolm said. "At any rate, it won't rain until much later on."

He was afraid that she would want to return before he had plucked up courage to confess his love. He thought, dismally, that none of his designs would come to pass, that they would return no different from when they had come. There would be no talking of the future, a future made glorious by their love, or of how, when they had left school and he was ecrning sufficient money, they would be married so that they could be always together. She would no know that he worshipped her, and that his whole life was dedicated to her.

"Look! There's a swan", cried Margaretta, running to the water's edge, where she stood on the bank watching the swan

glide past. "It's got such a frown on its face. Can you see?"

Malcolm raised himself on his arm, and could see just its head; but he was more entranced with Margaretta as she stood silhouetted against the sky. He could see the dark suggestion of her limbs as the light shone through the thin silk of her dress.

"Malcolm", she called, turning towards him, "I've not had my apple yet".

Suddenly, he saw how easy it would be for her to fall in the river, and action synchronised with the thought. He pitched the apple just too high for her. She reached up and took a quick step behind her. Then, with a short gasp of horror, she fell backwards into the water.

Shocked at what he had done, Malcolm hesitated for a space. No sooner was the paralysing terror broken than he dragged off his jacket and ran to the water.

The current had swept Margaretta into midstream and Malcolm caught a glimpse of her face as white as a butterfly against the darkness of the oily-looking water.

He was almost crying as he called: "It's all right. I'm coming."

As soon as he was in the water, he realised that he ought to have dived in lower down, so that the current would have brought her in to him; but it was too late to think of that, and he struck out with all his force towards her. She had disappeared from his sight, but he aimed for the spot where he had last seen her.

He did not seem able to make progress; the undertow dragged at his legs, and hidden rushes hampered his movements. He trod water, gasping for breath, while trying to place her. A flash of white a short distance away caught his eye, and he set off again with fear in his heart, fear that he might be too late.

He trod water once more, but he could not see her. He dived and swam under water until his chest was nearly bursting. He dived again and again, and at the third dive he saw her being sucked towards the side. Perhaps he was not too late. He clutched

her hair, and half floating her, he allowed the current to sweep them along until he had regained his breath. Then, dragging Margaretta after him, he managed to reach the bank.

He lay for several minutes half sprawled across her, too exhausted to move from where he had fallen on climbing out of the water. But fear gave him fresh strength, and he pushed himself on to his knees.

Margaretta lay as he had left her, crumpled and sodden. Her hair stuck in streaks across her face; her clothes were tight upon her like a blue skin.

"Margaretta", he whispered, "Margaretta. Are you all right?"

But the staring eyes did not move, and her chest was as still as the ground beneath him. He tore open her dress and laid his hand over her tiny left breast. But he could feel no movement, no pulsing that suggested life.

"O God", he moaned, "please help me. It was my fault, all my fault. Please let her live, please let her be all right."

He remembered the first-aid he had learnt at school, and turning Margaretta on to her face, he knelt by her side, and spreading his hands across the small of her back, he pressed rhythmically forwards and backwards, forwards and backwards.

Once he thought he saw a tremor run through her chest, but it was only her breast which slightly shook as he kneaded her back; and although he worked on for a long time, he could not bring back the breathing to her bosom, nor any life to her body.

He closed his eyes and muttered:

"Please, God, forgive me. You know I only wanted to tell her I loved her."

He turned her once more on to her back, and knelt looking into her face. All power of thought had left him; the use had gone from his body, and he continued looking into her face unable to move, until a blackness surged over him, and he fell forwards, his head dropping on to her shoulder.

## HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

# *Wordsworth's "Borderers"*

"THE BORDERERS" was written by Wordsworth during the first year of his sojourn at Racedown, in Dorsetshire, to which he had retired with Dorothy in September, 1795. His earlier revolutionary hopes had by then been completely shattered, the glamour of his love for Annette Vallon had faded, leaving behind a deep sense of shame for passion indulged and responsibility evaded; he had tried and failed to heal his wounded faith in life and restore his self-esteem by Godwinism, only to lose "all feeling and conviction" and to yield up "moral questions in despair". What he called "the crisis of that strong disease" was upon him.

But it has hardly been recognised how intimately *The Borderers* reveals the nature of this crisis. For Professor Garrod it is the work of a man who had just become "an out-and-out Godwinian", a view only possible to one who had failed to enter intimately either into Wordsworth's life or into his play. To M. Legouis it represents the beginning of Wordsworth's revolt against Godwin, and Professor de Selincourt regards it as "rather an exposure than an exposition of Godwinism". And so far as it is in any real sense Godwinian at all, they are clearly right. It is true that in his preface and later notes Wordsworth suggested that the play, like *Guilt and Sorrow*, illustrated a Godwinian idea:

> "The study of human nature", he wrote, "suggests this awful truth, that as in the trials to which life subjects us, sin and crime are apt to start from their very opposite qualities, so are there no limits to the hardening of the heart and the perversion of the understanding to which they may carry their slaves. During my long residence in France, while the Revolution was rapidly advancing to its extreme of wickedness, I had frequent opportunities of being an eye-witness of this process, and it was while that knowledge was fresh upon my memory that the Tragedy of *The Borderers* was composed."

As with most of Wordsworth's later explanatory comments, which reflected the self-deception that had then become habitual, this is not quite the truth. As we know, it was only during the two years which followed his stay in France that he became fully aware that generous ideals might apparently produce their opposite, "sin and crime". But it is necessary to emphasise the fact, overlooked by such scholarly critics as Professor Garrod, that he owed this discovery primarily to his own experience of life, and not to a reading of *Political Justice* or *Caleb Williams*. His love of Annette and his belief in Liberty had been generous ideals which apparently, and to his deep distress, produced their opposite. He may have gone to Godwin for an explanation of the fact, discovering in him one of those "careful observers" who make intelligible "the apparently *motiveless* actions of bad men."

But if he adopted for a time Godwin's psychology, the experience to which he applied it was his own, both in relation to the Revolution and to Annette. The conception, for example, that "there are no limits to the hardening of the heart" was alien to Godwin who cared little about the heart and based all his hopes of individual salvation upon the head. But it was a bitter reality to Wordsworth who was suffering the wretched consequences of denying the heart, not only as a Godwinian, but as a tenacious egotist, and who had begun to feel that there *were* no limits to the deadening process.

And in fact not even Oswald, the villain of *The Borderers*, is in any real sense a Godwinian, although at times he talks Godwinism. He is a projection of one side of Wordsworth's dual personality, just as all the other characters embody some phase of his experience. Certainly Marmaduke, the ingenuous youth who is seduced by Oswald's specious doctrine and reduced to despair, is more essentially Wordsworth himself than any other character. But in reality the whole play is a myth of himself. The personal motif is struck from the very beginning in the lines

I have heard
Of some dark deed to which in early life
His passion drove him.

The words refer to Oswald. But Oswald represented the intellectual egotist and sceptical realist which Wordsworth had in part become through the deeds of blind enthusiasm and "unsanctified" love to which passion had driven him in France. And the whole play dramatises the stages by which the Oswald in him, the selfish mind and fear principle, insidiously defeated the Marmaduke, the generous, credulous believer in life and humanity. The old, blind and good Herbert, embodies the Life and Humanity, of which he had begun by doubting the virtue and ended by denying; while Idonea, the old man's daughter and Marmaduke's lover, at once trusting and cherishing life, is the innocence (Annette's innocence), which he felt he had betrayed and sinned against as a sensualist. His sin against her he projected into the voluptuary Clifford, among whose victims was

A Maiden innocent till ensnared by Clifford
Who soon grew weary of her,

and who is supposed to haunt the churchyard where her infant is buried—an early example of the wronged and forsaken woman who was to haunt so many later poems and had already appeared in *Guilt and Sorrow*.

But Marmaduke is also deceived into believing that Herbert, beneath his mask of "deep and simple weakness", is planning to hand over Idonea herself to Clifford, and with her compliance. This is in fact an invention of Oswald's lying mind, calculated to wound at its most vulnerable point Marmaduke's belief in the inherent goodness of life. And Wordsworth's own revulsion from his passion for Annette, his conception of it as a sin of the senses for which he was primarily responsible, but in which, he felt in his most negative moments, she had wrongly complied, sprang from the rationalistic, life-denying Oswald in himself.

Three years' personal experience, therefore, of mental and moral disillusionment lay behind Marmaduke's words at the end of Act I:

> Oswald, the firm foundation of my life
> Is going from under me; these strange discoveries—
> Looked at from every point of fear or hope,
> Duty, or love—involve, I feel, my ruin.

Further quotation, however, will reveal more convincingly than argument the truth of our contention that in *The Borderers* Wordsworth dramatised the stages by which he lost his sense of his own and of life's innocence.

Early in Act II we find Marmaduke protesting to Oswald that a love of his fellows and compassion for the weak have always ruled his nature, but admitting, after Oswald has sneered at sentimental benevolence and youth's instinctive generosity, that

> there is something
> Which looks like a transition in my soul,
> And yet it is not.

There follows the protracted struggle between the reason of his heart which tells him that Herbert is good and deserves his love, and the logic of his head that feeds upon Oswald's lying tales. He falls into just that agonised perplexity which Wordsworth had known for so long.

> *Mar.* Which way soe'er I turn, I am perplexed.
> *Osw.* Now, on my life, I grieve for you. The misery
> Of doubt is insupportable. Pity, the facts
> Did not admit of stronger evidence. . . .
> *Mar.* Weak ! I am weak—there does my torment lie,
> Feeding itself.

To Oswald, however, it is well for false romantic illusions to be shattered, as doubtless Wordsworth, also, had comforted himself by thinking, when the self-regarding Oswald in him was in temporary control. "He may live", says Oswald of Marmaduke—

To thank me for this service. Rainbow arches,
Highways of dreaming passion, have too long,
Young as he is, diverted wish and hope
From the unpretending ground we mortals tread;—
Then shatter the delusion, break it up
And set him free.

Again the Wordsworth who once believed in the righteousness of the Revolutionary wars of defence, but had learnt that violence offered no cure for violence, spoke in the lines addressed by Marmaduke to Lacy:

Lacy! We look
But at the surfaces of things; we hear
Of towns in flames, fields ravaged, young and old
Driven out in troops to want and nakedness;
Then grasp our swords and rush upon a cure
That flatters us, because it asks not thought:
The deeper malady is better hid;
The world is poisoned at the heart.

And again the conscience-stricken, but still self-justifying lover of Annette dictated the further words to Lacy:

I love the Father in thee.
You know me, Friends; I have a heart to feel,
And I have felt, *more than perhaps becomes me*
*Or duty sanctions.*

Act III records quite clearly his attempt to resolve through Godwinism both his remorse and the problem of a world "poisoned at the heart". In the early soliloquy of Oswald we find Wordsworth analysing his diseased condition, as he must have done so often and as he was to continue doing with deeper and deeper insight through the following years. Meanwhile Oswald's story that Idonea is "right willing" to become Clifford's mistress completes Marmaduke's disillusionment of life. He loses all belief in moral values. His heart becomes like a stone.

I am cut off from man;
No more shall I be man—no more shall I
Have human feelings!

Herbert, however, who is of course ignorant of Marmaduke's state or the cause of it, offers him advice which, significantly enough, is in the lofty moralistic strain of Wordsworth's later manner. "Learn, Young Man", he says,

To fear the virtuous, and reverence misery,
Whether too much for patience, or, like mine,
Softened till it becomes a gift of mercy.

Not yet, however, could the dignified solemnities and sympathies of old age fill the vacuum of disillusioned youth. To Marmaduke Herbert's words seem only the hypocrisy of a villain. In his heart he still cannot quite believe in Herbert's guilt, as something in Wordsworth could hardly admit that the world and he himself were "poisoned at the heart". But the deceived rationalist in Marmadule assents to the guilt, and he leaves Herbert to die alone on the moor.

Thus had Wordsworth turned his back upon life and sought escape from his wretchedness and sense of guilt in Godwinism. And Marmaduke does the same. For in the play it is now that we have from Oswald those paraphrases of *Political Justice* which have led superficial critics to describe it as a Godwinian tract, in particular the lines:

To-day you have thrown off a tyranny
That lives but in the torpid acquiescence
Of the world's masters, with the musty rules
By which they uphold their craft from age to age:
You have obeyed the only law that sense
Submits to recognise; the immediate law,
From the clear light of circumstances, flashed
Upon an independent Intellect.
Henceforth new prospects open on your path;

Your faculties should grow with the demand;
I still will be your friend, will cleave to you
Through good and evil, obloquy and scorn,
Oft as they dare to follow on your steps.

Marmaduke, however, having been led to betray his heart to his head, would "abide the issue" of his act, like Judas, alone. But Oswald clings to him and combats his inward distress with all the realist's selfish logic. "My Young Friend", he says (and his words were, indeed, most intimately Wordsworth's own),—

As time advances either we become
The prey or masters of our own past deeds. . . .

and

Remorse—
It cannot live with thought; think on, think on,
And it will die.

Yet Godwinian thought could not, as Wordsworth had discovered, extinguish a corroding conscience. And the tale which Oswald forthwith tells of his own abandonment of an innocent sea-captain on a desert island only deepens Marmaduke's self-disgust, while it afforded Wordsworth an opportunity of dramatising again the original fall from innocence into sin, which obsessed him. The struggle, indeed, between rationalistic self-justification and a deeper conviction of guilt reaches its climax in this dialogue between Marmaduke and Oswald:

*Mar.* We all are of one blood, our veins are filled
At the same poisonous fountain! . . .
But his own crime had brought on him this doom,
His wickedness prepared it; these expedients
Are terrible, yet ours is not the fault. . . .
*Osw.* The man had never wronged me.
*Mar.* Banish the thought, crush it, be at peace. . . .
*Osw.* So we pursued our voyage: when we landed,
The tale was spread abroad; my power at once
Shrunk from me; plans and schemes, and lofty hopes—

All vanished. . . . .
I hid my head within a Convent, there
Lay passive as a dormouse in midwinter.
That was no life for me—I was o'er-thrown,
But not destroyed.

The reference here to Wordsworth's own experience after his return from France is apparent. And even more self-revealing are the words with which Marmaduke reproves Oswald for not feeling his guilt more deeply, for merely enduring its stigma unchanged instead of suffering it in the deepest sense:

You ought to have seen
The guilt—have touched it, felt it at your heart—
As I have done.

Oswald, however, goes on to tell how his sentimental remorse was cured by a Godwinian philosophy, how he discovered a new and "salient spring of energy", through binding himself "to purposes of reason". But Marmaduke is too ill at heart to be touched by his vaunting rationalism. "O wretched human-kind!", he cries,

Until the mystery
Of all this world is solved, well may we envy
The worm, that underneath a stone whose weight
Would crush the lion's paw with mortal anguish,
Doth lodge, and feed, and coil, and sleep in safety.

Oswald redoubles his persuasions. He describes the enhancing effect of majestic natural objects upon his own "intellectual being", and how in the exultant sense of personal omnipotence which they engendered he felt raised above all "the world's opinions and her usages",

a Being who had passed alone
Into a region of futurity,
Whose natural element was freedom,

and that

> if ought on earth deserves a curse,
> 'Tis that worst principle of ill which dooms
> A thing so great to perish self-consumed.
> —So much for my remorse!

Marmaduke bids him stop. "I may not", he says, "cannot,
ow thee". Nor can all Oswald's scoffs at false shame and the
webs of convention move him. Oswald, therefore, throws off
mask and confesses to his calculated deception, and the horri-
Marmaduke is left only with the faint hope that Herbert may
be alive. "Alive or dead", he cries, "I'll find him", as Words-
:th fleeing from Godwinism to Dorset, sought to restore the
which he had denied.

[his scene, therefore, clearly epitomises in a melodramatic form
crisis of the struggle between Wordsworth's heart and his
d, and his rejection of Godwinism. In the next scene we are
:n still another rendering of the selfish "desertion" theme, that
the dying Herbert by the terrified Eldred, and in Act V
:maduke faces his guilt and its consequences with just that
ierfect humbling of himself to it which was to be Wordsworth's
tiny.

)swald still believes that his dupe, when his immediate distrac-
ı is over, will become

> A shadow of myself—made by myself.

l so far as he represented the selfish mind and fear principle in
ɪrdsworth, he was to some extent prophetically right. For
ıough Wordsworth abandoned Godwinism, he retained as much
the intellectual egotism underlying Godwinism as he needed
preserving a wrong kind of self-respect. And so does Marma-
ːe. Even in the moment when he has to face Idonea with the
ɔwledge that Herbert is dead through his act of desertion, he
ılifies his remorse with self-justification:

there was a plot,
A hideous plot, against the soul of man:
It took effect—and yet I baffled it,
In *some* degree.

Moreover the same egotism persists in his melodramatic outbursts, as for example:

*Mar.* There, *is* a malady—
(*Striking his heart and forehead.*) And here, and here,
A mortal malady. I am accurst:
All nature curses me, and in my heart
*Thy* curse is fixed.

More true in feeling are his words when Idonea faints:

*She* is not dead. Why!—if I loved this woman,
I would take care she never woke again;
But she WILL wake, and she will weep for me,
And say no blame was mine—

words which Wordsworth surely wrote with Annette in his mind. And the same personal reference is to be found in Marmaduke's concluding words to Oswald:

to endure,
That is my destiny. May it be thine:
Thy office, thy ambition, be henceforth
To feed remorse, to welcome every sting
Of penitential anguish, yea with tears
When seas and continents shall lie between us . . .
a wanderer *must* I go,
The Spectre of that innocent Man, my guide.
No human ear shall ever hear me speak ;
No human dwelling ever give me food,
Or sleep or rest: but over waste and wild,
In search of nothing that this earth can give,
But expiation, will I wander on—
A Man, by pain and thought compelled to live,
Yet loathing life—till anger is appeased
In Heaven, and Mercy gives me leave to die.

If these lines are divested of their melodrama, they may be said to express very accurately the feelings which gnawed at Wordsworth's heart during the early months at Racedown. And although his wound was apparently to heal beneath the ministering hands of Dorothy and the inspiration of Coleridge, deep down the lesion remained. Henceforth it was, indeed, his destiny "to feed remorse", to be "a wanderer over waste and wild" in search of an expiation which he could not find, although he sought to forget his failure in an instinctive surrender to Nature and to conceal it behind a sympathetic study of men more humble than himself and the solemnities of a lofty but at heart egotistic philosophy.

*The Borderers*, then, like so much that Wordsworth wrote, is autobiographical. Into its fictitious characters he projected himself and his problems, as he was later to do with a host of other characters, actual and imaginary. Far then from agreeing with Professor Garrod that "what is really significant, and perhaps alone relevant, is that the poem is built out of an essentially Godwinian idea", we would suggest that this is almost as incidental to its true significance as the occasional echoes of both *Hamlet* and *Lear*. Its real significance lies in the fact that it reveals as no other extant evidence does (for in *The Prelude* the whole situation is modified even in the lines which are borrowed from *The Borderers*), the irresolvable conflict between heart and head, self-contempt and self-esteem, which had torn Wordsworth's being with gathering intensity for three years. It shows the extent to which his heart triumphed in his rejection of Godwinism, but the extent, too, to which it failed and was compromised by his self-regarding mind. Marmaduke, in short, could not cast off the shadow of Oswald and so regain his innocence. He could only have done so by rising above it to that plane of liberated being in which heart and head are reconciled in a new consciousness. But to rise above the dualism it was necessary to bow himself down before life with a willing submission, in which no element of pro-

testing self-esteem remained. As a boy and a youth Wordsworth had so humbled himself to the spirit of life in Nature and known the ecstatic joy of communion with the One. But that had been an instinctive self-surrender which involved no conscious moral effort. The submission, however, which he was now called upon to make was opposed by his strongest instinct, his tenacious love of self. It meant carrying the painful struggle within him to that extreme point where either death must be accepted or new life born through utter self-abnegation. If he had been capable of thus positively accepting, as distinct from merely enduring, the grief and pain and self-reproach which made his days a misery, he would have known the agonies of dissolution, but they would have passed into the pangs of birth. By committing himself completely to reality he would have not only laid a ghost which was to haunt and hamper him for the rest of his days, but he would have emerged as one regenerated.

For whatever pain or catastrophe may come to us, if we take it *into* our life and assimilate it creatively, we discover that it has truth and beauty and necessity in something other than a Godwinian sense. It is no longer fortuitous because it has become one with the reason of our being and the vital form of our life. And so we cease to resent it as an accident, for which in different degrees we were not responsible, and to waste our spiritual resources in protesting our innocence or stifling the whispers of an uneasy conscience.

Wordsworth was to spend his life in such self-defensive warfare, culminating in barren self-righteousness, because he recoiled at this time from the ultimate act of self-surrender which alone could have liberated him. And *The Borderers*, therefore, is not merely the product of mental disease, as Swinburne wrote, but a confession of spiritual disease, for which Wordsworth found a self-preserving palliative, but never a cure.

# *O God, O Lady Houston*

*Under the heading "Lady Houston and India" the "Daily Mail" of 5th May printed an open letter from Lady Houston to the Vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, in which the following passage occurs—*

*"In eulogising this insolent creature Gandhi you uphold the devil and trample Christ under your feet. That is how I see it, for I have relations in India. . . ."*

Harken, perplexed and leaderless people of England!
Three ultimate facts there be that shall save you from doubt:
C. of E. stands for religion. All other religions are "so-called."
Wealth is the key to the kingdom the power and the glory.
The National Anthem is the one perfect tune in existence.
God save the King!

There is no Indian Question.
And remember, I KNOW,
For I have relations in India.

There is no doubt in my mind on any conceivable subject.
(I have held fast by the three great ultimate facts)
Red on the map is the only colour for India.
White is the only respectable colour for skin.
Blue is the only decent political shade.
Rule, Britannia!
There is no Indian Question.
And remember, I KNOW,
For I have relations in India.

ALAN MCGLASHAN.

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

# *Prologue to Russia*

LENIN. *By D. S. Mirsky* (Holme Press) 5*s.*
I WENT TO RUSSIA. *By Liam O'Flaherty* (Cape) 7*s.* 6*d.*

"WHAT'S the good of it all?" cried the English wife of a high Soviet official to Mr. O'Flaherty. "This Five Year Plan won't make the world any more interesting. It will just give the Russians motor-cars and newspapers and chewing gum, just as people have in America. Their ambition is to create a new America in Russia, only worse. There's nothing new here."

We understand her meaning, though there is, of course, something new in the simple fact of a few tens of millions of human beings who never aspired to those luxuries, getting motor-cars and newspapers and chewing gum; and there is again something new in the determination and the speed with which they are being alternately cajoled and dragooned along the quickest road to that provisional millennium. But of this millennium we English have some, and the Americans more experience. It is not an essential newness; and an essential newness is what the lady wanted—the elusive thing that is sometimes called "a new spirit."

Is that at work in Russia to-day? Indubitably, by the witness of all competent observers, among the members of the Communist party there is an active, unquestioning, self-devoting and quasi-religious zeal towards a definite and immediate end. Nothing of the kind exists among us in England; but perhaps its counterpart may be found in Italy. Perhaps, we say: for it is a question to be asked whether the will that finds expression in the Communist party in Russia is *essentially* different (however different in its degree of consciousness) from the will that finds expression in the activity of the Fascist party in Italy—the unconscious will of a nation threatened with disintegration to remain a nation still. Leninism was the only way to save Russia; Fascism the only way to save Italy. Each supplied a determined and ruthless will to govern, and the machinery for governing, which was desired unconsciously by the nation, in the only way it could be supplied in the given circumstances. In the last resort any government is better than none, provided that it governs. Just as I, personally,

would rather be "liquidated" in a Russian timber camp for the crime of being a recalcitrant intellectual, than murdered or maimed by some lawless marauders under an anarchy. In the first case I should understand, though I might not approve, my sentence; in the second I should feel that I was annihilated by sheer stupidity.

Nationally, therefore, as a necessary means to the desirable end of the continued existence of Russia as a nation, Russian Communism is justified absolutely; as I believe Fascism is justified absolutely in Italy. And it is primarily for this reason that a distinguished and deep-thinking intellectual like D. S. Mirsky has deliberately and definitely declared his adherence to the new Russia. Nor is this adherence conditional. Mirsky sees clearly that to adhere to the new Russia means to adhere to Leninism, which is the foundation on which the new Russia is built, or rather the life-blood which flows in the veins of its growing body. If Mirsky were to return to Russia, he would return to be an active Communist, as soon as he could pass the stringent tests imposed on Party-probationers.

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Of the national validity and the national significance of the new Russia there can be no doubt whatever. The next question to be asked is whether it has positive international significance and validity? Negatively significant it must be. Russia's behaviour in the international market, the selling of its state-owned commodities at any price to buy the machinery it must have to carry out the programme of agricultural collectivisation, is of immediate and enormous economic significance. A state which does not, and by charter of its own existence cannot, play the rules of the international economic game, must disturb the game. It will disturb it more and more. The question here is simply at what time the other nations will decide to boycott Russia—not on grounds of high "morality"—a crusade against the impiety of Communism, or what not—but of simple self-preservation. Just as, ultimately, Russia's action in selling at all costs is not really based on the equally high "moral" ground of destroying capitalism, but on the same simple one of self-preservation.

Sooner or later, and sooner rather than later, the question of the economic blockade of Russia must become urgent—for the longer the blockade is delayed the greater the primary productivity of Russia must

become and the more catastrophic its economic influence on the world-market. This may be an altogether mistaken prophecy. It may be that when Russia is economically organised and takes its inevitable place alongside America as one of the two greatest producing countries in the world, there will be a world-economic arrangement including Russia: a virtual federation of the world. But the blockade seems more probable. Then the question will become urgent, which may seem (though quite falsely) to have a merely speculative interest now—the question of the positive significance and validity of the new Russia.

In other words, is the social order which we see in process of creation in Russia a better social order than that of England, or France, or America? And even if we could answer that question unhesitatingly in the affirmative, we have still to ask whether the new Russian social order is really relevant to English conditions. These questions are extraordinarily difficult to answer. It is extraordinarily difficult even to be sure that one is fit to try to answer them. Our conscious and unconscious prejudice against a social system in which most of the values we hold as personally precious are completely disregarded, is tremendous. To use the cant phrase of Soviet politics, we have to "liquidate" ourselves before we can form an impersonal opinion; and just as the process of social "liquidation" in Russia has been necessarily accompanied by harshness and downright brutality, so we are compelled in preparing our minds for this act of judgment to do active violence to ourselves.

Well, one certain thing in a man's life of any worth is that he dies many deaths, and these necessary deaths when they come to him have a distinctive quality of their own. They are seen to be at once quite inevitable, and quite incalculable; they could never have been prophesied, yet they are completely natural. To accept Communism as an ideal indubitably means a death for a Western European. At present, I do not know whether it is a natural and inevitable death; and a death that is not natural and inevitable is a death indeed—a suicide. But the moment may come when our profound reluctance will disappear; and the last vestiges of our "bourgeois mentality" vanish like a dream.

In the meanwhile, we stand hesitant without motives for action in the world of existence. We watch the conscious world about us divide in its desperate search for an aim, into Catholicism on the one side and Communism on the other—into those for whom the modern age is a

time of tribulation, and those for whom it is the supreme opportunity. That Communism is the logical end of industrialism seems to me fairly clear. It is Industrialism, fully conscious of itself, creating its own controls, preparing its own organic beauty. With all its harshness, Russian Communism is a far more *comely* thing than the hybrid industrialism of the West, which simply multiplies the power in the hands of irresponsible individuals. But that is the price we pay for the still precious remnants of our individualism.

We must at least prepare ourselves to sacrifice them. If we are thus prepared, our transition to Communism, which will in any case not be violent—for it is easy to forget that Russian Communism *is* Russian, and that the Tcheka is no monstrosity to those who lived under the Okhrana—may not even be painful. Those who expect, or fear, that Communism will be accompanied by a bloody revolution in these islands, are romantic and stupid: we happen to be the nation in the world where the phrase *self*-government truly describes the reality. What will happen is that we shall wake up one morning and find we are Communists, if it is indeed our destiny to become Communists. To discover whether it is our destiny is the problem. Therefore, we must watch Russia as intently as we can, remembering that so far we have seen only the birth-pangs. They are always ugly, and the cries are painful. But the birth may be beautiful indeed. Russia may have lost its soul to save it, and ours into the bargain.

What shall we do? Become Communists?

If there is any substance in these reflections, it is ridiculous for an Englishman to become a Communist, if by that we mean an active believer in the armed prosecution of class warfare and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The English Revolution, if it comes, will assuredly not follow the pattern of the Russian, which was prescribed by conditions fantastically remote from our own. The Englishman who becomes a Communist becomes by that very fact something quite different from a Russian Communist. The process of Russian Communism is quite peculiar to a nation whose industrialisation is imperfect, or even rudimentary. English Communism would, I think, naturally take the form of a ruthless spiritual preparation; and among the chief elements in this self-education is the adjustment of the mind and heart to a rigorous dialectical materialism, in religion, in morality, in economics, and in history. Of dialectical materialism in religion and

philosophy I have written sufficiently, or too much, of late in these pages. Of its practical counterparts, nothing. But manifestly one of its counterparts is a conscious political opportunism, of which a magnificent and inspiring example is given in D. S. Mirsky's monograph on Lenin. This little book is a masterpiece: it is a new kind of book as it were compelled by the presence of a new kind of man. One can gather from it at least a glimmering of how to belong to the future.

But why should we belong to the future? it may be asked. Above all when the future looks so unpleasant, and the past so rich and glorious. Ultimately, the reason is simple: it is the need in those who feel it—the unconquerable instinct to become as far as may be a naked vehicle of destiny. We have constantly to face the uncomfortable task of "liquidating" ourselves. That does not mean to be unmindful, or forgetful, of our own past, or the past of history; but rather to become completely conscious of it. Just as a true materialism is not the denial of the spiritual, but the purification of the spritual from all impurities; so to become completely conscious of ourselves, and of our history, is the final form of annihilation of the ego.

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Probably it is no simple accident that the Pope has been moved at this moment to declare, *urbi et orbi*, that Catholicism and Socialism (by which he means precisely the politics, of whatever pattern, that is based on dialectical materialism) are utterly opposed, one to the other. Catholicism is based on the "contamination"—I use the word in the purely technical and philological sense—of the spiritual and the moral; Leninism is based on the complete distinction between them. I hold that we have reached a point at which this distinction should form the basis of all our conscious action; and that action which is not based on this distinction is not conscious, and therefore not reasonable.

With a view to establishing this distinction in my own mind and in the minds of my readers, I propose henceforward to give to various books on Russian Communism the best consideration of which I am capable. I ask them to bear in mind the necessary discriminations which I have already suggested—not to be deluded into believing that because Russian Communism has followed a certain pattern, English Communism (if it be found necessary) must follow the same pattern. It is an essential part of our duty, as I conceive it, to discover if we can what

Communism should mean for us, and resolutely to abjure all red-tie romanticism. The object of our search is not Communism in itself, but the proper politics for an Englishman who accepts the basis of dialectical materialism. Leninism, as Mirsky's book decisively shows, is the politics of dialectical materialism for Russia. To watch its workings may help us to discover the counterpart for ourselves.

Next month I shall discuss the facts revealed in *Red Bread*, by Maurice Hindus (Cape: 12*s*. 6*d*. net), and *Moscow has a Plan*, by M. Ilin (Cape: 5*s*. net). Mr. Hindus' book is a really admirable description of the agricultural revolution now in progress in Russia.

## R. B. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM

# *Garibaldi in South America*

THE MEMOIRS OF GARIBALDI. *Edited by Alexandre Dumas*. Translated, with an Introduction by R. S. Garnett (Benn) 21s.

A CHARMING book, edited by two men who understood Garibaldi and appreciated him.

Dumas' own foreword reads like a page from one of his own books. As the *Observer* said, Mr. Garnett's introduction is all too short. Good it is certainly, and after all perhaps quite long enough. Generally your introduction, like your chairman's speech, does not err on the side of brevity. It is the fashion of the moment, that is in Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic countries, to write huge tomes a thousand pages long. In Latin countries, writers as a rule compress their books into the smallest compass possible.

Dumas, of course, was made by nature to understand and love the picturesque descendant of the condottieri. That Mr. Garnett should have formed a similar estimate of him is more difficult to understand.

Garibaldi had all the qualities (or defects) that make an Englishman detest a man.

He wore his heart upon his sleeve, and his hair long, like an old-time Riograndeuse Gaucho, dressed carelessly, often eccentrically, cared nothing either for money or for rank and spoke his mind without reserve on every question under heaven. He wept and prayed in public, called on his God aloud in danger, and the danger past, thanked Him as openly.

His real nobility of character, his generosity, tenderness of heart, his love of nature, belief in real and in theoretic liberty, often were obscured in the eyes of those who had not met him personally. Once see him face to face, and then the dourest Englishman threw his reserve to the four winds, and followed him, at least in spirit, as the apostles followed Christ.

As said Fray Luis de Leon, "Although I never saw the mother Teresa in this life, I see her in her children, which are her works."

Therefore, I take it, Mr. Garnett is no ordinary Englishman, and it is fortunate that a young woman (name undivulged) brought him the edition published at Naumbourg, that spurred him on to write.

Some, it appears, still entertain angels, unawares.

No part of Garibaldi's life is less known or appreciated than the eventful years he spent in Rio Grande and in Uruguay.

There he became a man, he learned to ride, and the art of guerilla warfare and generally put on his boots. He learned to manage men. Lastly he found a wife and met his negro servant Aguyar who followed him to death. His memoirs of that time read like a page of some historian of La Conquista, or a romance of chivalry.

Fifty years ago his name was in the mouth of everybody in South America, men showed with pride the house in a back street of Montevideo where he lived.

In a house at the corner of a little grass-grown plaza in Gualeguayehu, we used to go and see the house where he was tortured. The fashion was in those days, after seeing it, to repair to the Hotel del Vapor, kept by an old Basque, Don Pedro, or to the rival hostelry of Ellerman. There we called for Vino Seco or Carlón, drank off a bumper of the thick heady stuff, yelled "Viva Garibaldi", mounted and galloped round the square at speed, pulling up one's horse as short as possible by Leon Pedro's door.

If one of the commentators fell off his horse, overcome by Carlón, and rolled upon the sandy street, to-morrow was another day. At times the ritual was varied by drinking confusion to Leonardo Millan, the man who tortured Garibaldi. It was an article of our simple faith that Garibaldi, when he took him prisoner, offered him a cup of coffee with his own hand, before he set him free. Certainly Garibaldi in his Memoirs says, "As for Don Leonardo Millan, I would not even see him, for fear that his presence would bring back to my mind all that I had undergone and would thus make me commit some action unworthy of myself."

He need have had no fear. Nothing unworthy ever crossed his mind, during the whole course of his career.

For all that nothing will ever shake my faith in the cup of coffee. It was just the thing that Garibaldi would have done. Therefore, I feel sure he did it, for faith is not concerned with anything but faith, on that rock on which stand every religion and all creeds.

The most curious pages of the book are without doubt his adventures in Uruguay and Rio Grande, and his account of Rozas and Artigas, the tyrants of the Argentine and Uruguay.

On all these Garibaldi spoke with the authority of an eye-witness and an actor in the events that he describes.

At that time, Rio Grande, always at variance with the central authorities in Rio, was in the throes of the Separatist rising, known as "El Guerra dos Farrapos". It got the name either from the ragged clothes (farrapo means a rag) of its adherents, or more probably, from a white ribbon that they wore round their hats. In the Memoirs, it is wrongly written as "Farrados", and may have been a printer's error, for Garibaldi must have heard the word a thousand times. In those dark ages, I have met ancient Farrapos, who had seen Garibaldi, and adored him. They always wore a moustache and an imperial to distinguish them from the Imperialists who were clean-shaven, and, of course, better dressed. The Farrapos were the country people, officered by the local landholders. All were born horsemen, riding on the native saddle, "el recao" with a single rein and the old mameluke bit, known as a "penaflor". They all wore their hair long, and sometimes had a plait hanging on each side of their cheeks. The frontispiece of Garibaldi on his horse is, save the ostrich feather in his hat, the exact picture of a Farrapo.

Amongst them Garibaldi learned to ride, and throw the lasso. The "recao" he used till his death, and it is shown in countless statues of him throughout Italy.

Brought up in a hard school at sea, in Rio Grande, he found even a harder life. Beef washed down with mate was his fare, if it was procurable, if not he drank such water as was to be found. He slept without a tent, his bed the native saddle, composed of several pieces, and for all covering, his cloak. It makes an admirable bed, as "il tuo dottore" knows, having slept on it for years.

Thus hardened, and become an admirable horseman, as all declare who knew him, he was equipped for all he had to undergo in Italy.

In Rio Grande, as he tells, he found a wife, a lady worthy of himself, an Amazon before the Lord, capable of galloping all day and sleeping on the ground.

All the innate tenderness of nature of the man comes out in the too brief, but passionate account of their brief courtship. Whether they were married, as the Spanish phrase goes, "in Latin", that is in a church, still remains doubtful, but certainly nature could not have given Anita a more suitable sharer of her life than Garibaldi.

Nor could Garibaldi, had he searched the world, have found a wife, braver, less selfish, or more devoted than Anita.

Marriages, they say, are made in Heaven, and if this is so, when the heroic pair plighted their troth in the Fazenda on the shore of Lake Merim, the angels must have smiled.

It was the irony of fate that Anita should have passed through so many perils in America to die so miserably in Italy during the disastrous retreat from Rome.

Reading the memoirs, one is struck with the resemblance of Garibaldi to Don Quixote. The same simplicity of character, the same desire to help the weak and the oppressed possessed them both. Neither of them ever counted costs before engaging in any enterprise, however desperate. Both of them had the same chivalrous attitude to women, and both, underneath their simplicity had a shrewd vein of worldly wisdom, mostly theoretical. Both were as brave as lions, not knowing that such a thing as fear existed.

Don Quixote had his Sancho and to complete the parallel Garibaldi had his faithful negro Aguyar. If their masters were alike no men could have been more dissimilar than were their squires. Sancho a coward from his birth upwards, and Aguyar as insensible to fear as was his master. One lives in his immortal sayings, and the other in his heroic death. Other eye-witnesses have left accounts of the nine years' siege of Montevideo, and the exploits of Admiral Brown. Only a very few have written of Rozas with as much knowledge and such an insight into his character.

No one, with the exception of Robertson in his *Letters on Paraguay* (John Murray, London, 1838) has said a word about Artigas, the great Gaucho leader of the plans of Uruguay.

Robertson gives a remarkable account of him, seated upon a bullock's skull, booted and spurred, dictating letters to his secretary, under a tree, living on beef and mate, like the poorest of his men. Withal a gentleman, for curiously enough, neither he nor his rival Rozas were country bred, but townsmen of good education and good family.

Garibaldi recognised his courage, and remarks "Artigas he was as brave as Rozas was cowardly."

Artigas, after his defeat by General Rivera, retired to Paraguay, where Dr. Francia protected and pensioned him. He died aged 87, still active, and his last words were, "Bring me my horse", a fitting farewell

to the world for an old Gaucho chief.

Both Garibaldi and Dumas have found a fitting Old Mortality, in Mr. Garnett.

Both worthies live again, in his fine translation, and both deserve their immortality.

## *The Importance of Platitudes*

"SCRAPS". *By "M.B.Oxon."* (C. W. Daniel Company) *6s.*

"THE profession to which I think I must have been born was that of rag-and-bone man". With this modest opening sentence "M.B.Oxon" strikes the note for his collection of articles written for the *New Age* in the past twenty years or so. In his early days, he tells us, he was inspired to collecting by a character in a Christmas Pantomime at the Crystal Palace, "who has always remained in my mind as the most sensible man I ever met. . . . *He believed in picking up things when they came along*" (author's italics). "He had an old sentry-box among his possessions, and also a doorplate with the name of Thompson—'Thompson with a P'—as it would come in so handy if his daughter (I forget whether he already had collected her) should marry a man of that name". "As time went on farther", he continues, "I started on the Intellectual rubbish heap. . . . Picking it over, I came on a good many things which looked very like babies that had been thrown away with their bath, and I started a sort of home for Lost Ideas. . . . As it was a lack of free money which made me first try my rubbish as presents to my friends, so now it is lack of free time that makes me try whether these scraps of wisdom in their out-of-date settings may not please some people better than the more up-to-date stuff on which my time is now spent". He suggests that some of them may seem rather foolish and incomprehensible. "Sometimes this is because the idea which I had picked up is so big that to make it really clear would have required a whole library of books. But often it is because (put your ear nearer) they are venturing to speak Disrespectfully of things which it is very wrong to speak of so; just as no proper person speaks disrespectfully of Efficiency, or the Gold Standard, or Personal Safety First."

These "scraps" range over a wide variety of subject matter—the Race Question, Devils, a number of Presidential Addresses to British

Associations, Noah's Flood, Traffic and Socialism, Sympathy, etc. But he claims for them more continuity than might appear at first sight. In a chapter on the State he says: "In both international and intra-national happenings the real struggle is that of Religion and the emotions against the tyranny of formal, clever, uncomprehending Mind". That is his thread of continuity, whether he is dealing with man as individual or man in society. Formal mind is a useful servant, but a bad master; and master it has tended more and more to become. Under its tyranny we remain half blind and miss our full development. He suggests how, by sedulously practised relaxation, we may learn to observe ourselves and discover "That there are more ways of 'thinking' than the few which we ordinarily use. . . . One result of success, among an infinity of others, will be that when we 'have nothing to do', we shall not feel it incumbent on us to do something. . . . We shall find that there is much 'inside' us. . . . And we shall begin to recognise that wonderful Reality in everything and every act which, though despised of men, is the clue to lead us unfailingly to the 'next step' in our daily lives, beyond which it is useless to look, since it moves as we approach it, like the end of the rainbow."

This wise little book abounds in pithy humour, which tempts to quotation. It is well said that when a man changes from an unsympathetic attitude to its opposite, "Even the trains seem to wait for him!" And the last note, like the first, is a modest disclaimer. "The excuse for such a series of platitudes as these is just that they are platitudes. For the name is only the millstone that we have tied round the necks of obvious truths which are specially objectionable."

G. L. D. DE VERE

# *Two Americans*

THE LIMESTONE TREE. *By Joseph Hergesheimer* (Heinemann) 7*s.* 6*d.*
MONEY WRITES. *By Upton Sinclair* (Werner Laurie) 7*s.* 6*d.*

IN every possible way Joseph Hergesheimer and Upton Sinclair stand as the poles apart. Hergesheimer is, to the last degree, pure artist, his declared aim, "the casting of transient life into the permanence of beautiful form". Sinclair, like Wells, is an artist only by accident, and more than Wells he has managed to suppress his natural gift, becoming an economic-political polemist using the novel simply to get over to as many readers as possible an incitement to change and reform. If the work of art he admires is not deliberately polemical, then it must at least be capable of having a polemical meaning read into it. For him the most important single fact about American civilisation is economic inequality, and in *Money Writes* he seeks to show something of the effect of that inequality upon contemporary American literature, with especial reference to the number of young writers who start out full of burning indignation against current social forces, only, as they make headway, to be bought up one by one by the wealthy magazines and publishers and succumb to the bribery of popular appeal. It is frankly a story no less true than unhappy that he has to tell, and he sets it forth admirably, covering practically the whole field of modern American literature, and naming both the culprits and the exceptions without fear or much favour. Yet while Sinclair is extremely good on the subject of the prostitute writer, he falls down badly when he approaches the really sincere man. The merchant novelist he can expose with the skill of long practice; the artist novelist he hasn't begun to understand. In short, the value and interest of *Money Writes* is purely personal and sociological; as literary criticism it simply doesn't exist, a fact perhaps nowhere more clearly shown than in the chapter in which he sets about Hergesheimer, sketches him almost spitefully as a fat, self-satisfied, self-important little man, summarises his novels with no appreciation of their spirit, charges him with triviality, inhumanity, and vulgarity, and finally leaves him hoisted disconsolately aloft upon "the tallest ivory tower in the United States", an "eighteenth century Tory" who sins against the light by being callously indifferent to housing conditions in the slums of Philadelphia!

Hergesheimer's characters, it may be admitted, are often almost blatantly parasitic—they tend, generally, to drink rather than work; if he has in his life ever written a word of protest against the exploitation of the masses I have forgotten it; the whole subject of reform he dismisses in the curt and bitter phrase: "Any improvement wouldn't occur during my life—the habit of lies and self-delusion had become a fundamental part of society". Yet he goes deeper than Sinclair has ever gone, and to the anguish and despair of life he offers an answer not social and utopian, but personal and immediate. All he has written has one subject only—the response of the individual to the indifference of the universe. In that lies for him the possibility, the fact rather, of an ultimate inexhaustible beauty of supreme courage, of integrity preserved against all the sheer assaults of existence. That is his "obligation of honour", his "substitute for a missing safety" amid "the lies and evasions that make up the treachery of living". It is the special merit of *The Limestone Tree* that this conception is more completely and economically implicit in it than in any other book he has written; each of the ten stories not only illustrates some aspect of it perfectly, but their sequence shows too the gradual growth in a single group of persons of a tradition in which it is implicit. The background of these stories is one hundred and twenty years of Kentucky history, their characters the members, mainly, of two families who intermarry, and through them all the reader follows the lives and deaths of "passionate and courageous men, generations of pure women", who "had learned how to meet disaster". Characters and background are alike very finely drawn, and the book contains some of the loveliest, the most natural and effortless, of its author's prose.

Sinclair, blind to its significance, would presumably dismiss it as negligible. God give him enlightenment! I honour him as a brave man and fine fighter, yet he is, when all is said and done, almost entirely a sociological phenomenon. He is important—no one can claim to know America who does not know his work—but his importance is contemporary. Hergesheimer does not stand beside but beyond the conflict, and will survive it. He is, indeed, permanent, his concern an attitude neither time nor knowledge can decay, a gesture of the spirit, at once a salutation and an acceptance, a defeat of death in the simple determination to die rather than betray a personal integrity. To-day in America, says Count Keyserling, group or community standards are

destroying all individuality. Yet "the human being dies alone, and he must perfect himself alone". That is, in a phrase, the sum of Hergesheimer's knowledge; it is the one thing Upton Sinclair has never understood. GEOFFREY WEST

## *Shorter Notices.*

ALL PASSION SPENT. *By V. Sackville West* (Hogarth Press) 7*s.* 6*d.*

The subject of this book is interesting, perhaps because it is fairly fresh—too many novels deal with the young. This heroine is eighty-eight, and has a full rich life to look back upon; and look back she does, with a detachment and honesty, never common but particularly uncommon in the period to which her youth belonged. The trouble is that her creator is hopelessly sentimental about her, and could not bear to afflict her with any of the disadvantages of old age. All her five senses are perfectly intact, she retains her exquisite beauty, she makes expeditions unaccompanied *by tube* from Fulham to Hampstead, she is never put out, always serene, understanding, and mistress of the situation. Her delightful Dickensian landlord and her taciturn but noble builder are equally unreal, her children are lay figures, and her great-grand-daughter resembles her in being too good to be true. The book, in fact, is "a pretty story." E. B. C. J.

ANDRÉ MAUROIS. *By David G. Larg.* Modern Writers Series (Shaylor) 3*s.* 6*d.*

The publisher's note explaining the purpose of this series is enough to raise the most unhappy expectations. It announces "a series of popular 'close-up' studies—flesh and blood portraits—of contemporary authors"—and so on. One is prepared to find in a book so unfortunately heralded cheap and snappy biography eked out by a chatty summary of its victim's "philosophy". Mr. Larg's book on Maurois is emphatically nothing of the kind. It is in fact a very substantial scrutiny of a difficult subject; for there is much more in Maurois than the genial cynicism of *Colonel Bramble* and the virtuosity of *Ariel.* Mr. Larg shows Maurois as a man of the comfortable classes, fortuitously (and very successfully) finding his way into literature by the accident of war; and thereafter seeking not simply to be a popular professional writer, but

to find some reconciliation between life and the life of letters. Mr. Larg's elucidation of this dual interest, not only in Maurois' case but as a general principle in the life of an artist, gives the book a wide and interesting critical scope; and his eighth chapter, in which he discusses art as a neurosis, is one which he might make the basis of a full study of this fascinating issue.

There is no space here to describe fully Mr. Larg's well-managed analysis of the Maurois' preoccupations with art and life, but it is done with knowledge and judgment and sensibility; and except for a tendency now and then to cut a phrase too fine, it is very well written. This book will do what few of its kind manage to do: it will make those who read it eager to read Maurois again; and especially to read such neglected work as *Dialogues sur le commandement*, published in England under the title *Captains and Kings* by John Lane five or six years ago. W. E. W.

THE SOUND AND THE FURY. *By William Faulkner* (Chatto & Windus) *7s. 6d.*

The sound and the fury does signify—but nothing very pleasant. There is much cleverness but no comfort of beauty in it. It is the story of a family, told from four points of view, on four days: it is constructed in fragments, scientifically broken, which dovetail when brought together, and the result is, in spite of the incredible first part, that the characters stand out as solid people, unpleasantly real, real to keep one awake at night.

There is, annoyingly, a preface by Mr. Richard Hughes. If the book is all he says of it, a preface is not only superfluous but mischievous. If, as seems obvious, it is the author's will to let the idiot's disjointed story be the first lightning flashes on the characters which, later, have steadier light on them, then it is not easy to understand why, except for advertisement purposes, he permitted any preface.

"Benjy", Mr. Hughes tells us, "has no sense of time . . . the whole of his thirty-three years are present to him in one uninterrupted and streamless flood. . . . Vague forms of people and events, apparently unrelated, loom out of the fog and disappear again. One is seeing the world through the eyes of an idiot."

The trouble is the forms are not vague enough. Even from an ideal idiot, to whom Mr. Faulkner is ready to supply effective memories

we cannot accept metaphor and simile—"the bright shapes went smooth and steady on both sides, the shadows of them flowing across Queenie's back. They went on like the bright tops of wheels." People talk in character through his dumb mouth and penless fingers. He quotes his father, "He is invaluable to my own sense of racial superiority", and "Et ego in Arcadia I have forgotten the Latin for hay", and his sister, "Get up Mau—— I mean Benjy". The significance of the remark is that his name had been changed from Maury to Benjy. Not the most phenomenal of memories could hold a blur of words that could have had no possible meaning at the time of their utterance. And some of the memories date back to his fifth year.

The second part is told by a brother on the day before he commits suicide. His mind runs on in this sort of way in a two-page passage without a full stop or a capital letter—"and i yes sir dont you and he every man is the arbiter of his own virtues". It is true that his thoughts have no capital letters, but then they have no letters at all, and, since some must be used, why on earth not use all?

The third part, told by another brother, is brutally real. The last part, told impersonally, is about people we know.

Nobody will read this book without strong feelings of some sort.

ORGILL MACKENZIE



*Printed by the Shenval Press, 58 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1, and published for the proprietors at 58 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1. Advertising Manager, S. R. Le Mare, 23 Paternoster Square, E.C.4. Telephone: City 9107. Registered for transmission by Canadian Registered Post.*

# Contents

AUGUST 1931: VOL. 2. NO. 5. NEW SERIES.

# *Books to Note*

TWENTY-THREE POEMS. *By Bryan Guinness.* Duckworth. 6/-.

(As readers of the *Adelphi* will know, Mr. Guinness has a genuinely origin and personal touch. His output so far has been so slight that one cannot prophes what his future poetic development may be. But his gift is authentic.)

PEOPLE AND THINGS. *By Harold Nicolson.* Constable. 5/-.

(The versatile Mr. Nicolson appears here in his rôle of universal uncle. Some c his broadcast talks are even better to read than they were to listen to.)

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES. (Confessions of a biologist.) *By Joha Hjort.* Trans. from the Norwegian by A. G. Jayne. Williams & Norgate. 15/-.

(The author "protests against the tendency which he descries, especially i modern scientific argument, to confuse the realm of ideas with the realm c facts. He attributes this confusion to Oriental influences wholly alien, in hi opinion, to the native European mentality, which is the one sure foundation c European civilisation.")

SHAKESPEARE'S WORKMANSHIP. *By Sir A. Quiller Couch.* Cambridg University Press. 5/-.

(The eighth volume of the C.U.P.'s excellent pocket edition of Q.'s essays.)

THE SHORTEST NIGHT. *By G. B .Stern.* Heinemann. 7/6.

(A detective story by a writer of quality.)

MODERN CIVILISATION ON TRIAL. *By C. Delisle Burns.* Allen & Unwin 10/6.

A STUDY IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF MALEBRANCHE. *By R. W. Church* Allen & Unwin. 10/6.

# *Some Periodicals*

THE CRITERION. (Vol. X, No. XLI.) Faber & Faber. 7/6

(Seven-and-six is a stiff price, but the *Criterion* is always so extremely good tha one hardly likes to complain. For comprehensiveness, thoroughness and con sistent high quality this magazine deserves full marks. Perhaps, however, Mr Eliot might make the contents more varied and a little less heavy without an sacrifice of quality.)

THE COUNTRYMAN. (July–Sept. 1931.) Idbury, Kingham, Ox. 2/(

(Bright and varied contents, and very well produced. This magazine will appea very much to some readers and not at all to others. But everyone will agree i has character.)

THE HOUND & HORN. (Summer, 1931.) 10 East 43rd Street, New York 50 cents or 2/-.

(This magazine has a youthful post-war American atmosphere. Sometime oppressively highbrow, it does not disdain to be bright and attractively experi mental.)

THE SYMPOSIUM. (July, 1931.) 100 Washington Sq. East, New York. 75 cents or 3/-.

(A quarterly which shares with the *Hound and Horn* the distinction of being th most interesting and intellectually alive of American magazines. The curren number has a fine article on Personality in Literature, by Mr. Herbert Read.)

# THE ADELPHI

VOL. 2, NO. 5, AUGUST 1931

## *Notes and Comments*

MR. HYDE'S criticism of the *Adelphi* which we published last month was directed against what he describes as the "neo-romantic" attitude. I am not sure whether he meant to include M. Jules de Gaultier and Mr. Santayana as well as Mr. Murry under this term, but even if we confine the discussion to Mr. Murry's philosophy, I feel that this description of it is misleading. For all I know, there may be some senses in which Mr. Murry can be described as "new" and "romantic", but I cannot see that Mr. Hyde has found any points to criticise in Mr. Murry's philosophy which are not equally characteristic of the philosophy of Spinoza, who is only very relatively "new" and whose Euclidean style is far removed from any ordinary conception of "romanticism". It must really be made clear, before we attempt to discuss the various issues that are closely interwoven in Mr. Hyde's essay, that the *Adelphi* is not a parish magazine conducted in the interests of some brand-new "religion" patented by Mr. Murry. Surely the fact that we have published the work of thinkers so diverse as Mr. Santayana, M. Shestov, Mr. Waldo Frank, M. de Gaultier, Mr. T. S. Eliot, Mr. Hugh Fausset, Mr. Murry and Mr. Hyde himself, will satisfy Mr. Hyde that we are not merely concerned to provide a platform for "a single faction."

But the main point in Mr. Hyde's essay is that, while he approves of our attempt to realise "a mode of consciousness in which the heart shall be organically co-ordinated with the head", he detects in us a tendency to "kick the intellect downstairs" and

"to deprive morality of its transcendental sanction". Unfortunately, these two charges are almost inextricably confused in his essay; but it seems that the charge of belittling the intellect—to which we plead Not Guilty—rests mainly upon a single review by Mr. G. B. Edwards, while Mr. Murry (with the "subtle" M. de Gaultier and the "dangerous" Mr. Santayana lurking in the background) is the villain of the *Adelphi*-versus-Morality drama. Possibly Mr. Hyde would associate the three villains with Mr. Edwards in the charge of belittling the intellect, but I do not think so. I shall therefore proceed to the second charge—to which we have no hesitation whatever in pleading Guilty.

Mr. Hyde finds in the *Adelphi* a "religion" distinguished by several "very revolutionary features". And what are these revolutionary features? "The notion of a personal God is abandoned, morality is deprived of its transcendental sanction, the element of the supernatural is completely repudiated."

IT IS true. We do abandon the notion of a personal God; we do deny to morality a transcendental sanction; we do repudiate the supernatural and seek, following Mr. Santayana, to demonstrate the "moral adequacy of naturalism". What I cannot understand is why Mr. Hyde thinks the abandonment of a personal God a revolutionary feature. It must surely be familiar to him from his study of Spinoza and of many other philosophers, both Western and Oriental, who will hardly be convicted of the neo-romantic vice of "kicking the intellect downstairs". As to the other two points, anyone who has achieved even a glimpse of the truth (which was not spoken yesterday) that "the soul is nothing but the body thinking itself, and the body is nothing but the soul as extension" will be prepared to consider at least the possibility that morality does not require a transcendental sanction; and anyone, it seems to me, who has even begun to master

the first essentials of a monistic standpoint will find the word 'supernatural' quite meaningless—it will not even need to be repudiated, because you cannot repudiate a word that has no meaning. Of course, it is obvious that one cannot do justice to the points at issue by this tit-for-tat method of argument, but unfortunately no other method is possible if the discussions are to be held in print, and if the disputants are not in a position to write books to one another. I shall therefore have to content myself with drawing attention to one passage in Mr. Hyde's article which may help me to disclose the root-divergence which I think is responsible for his dissatisfaction with the *Adelphi*.

This is the passage :

> Once assume that it is by pure contemplation alone that the Real can be experienced, once assume that to the purified vision every object becomes equally 'significant'—and the nerve of morality is cut at the root. It loses all claim to transcendental sanction and becomes a matter of personal prejudice or inclination alone. Why be good when badness is just as lovely to the contemplative eye?
>
> I am aware that the plane of the moral is not ultimate. Every person who is in the least imaginative must appreciate the fact that, on occasion, we can enjoy a state of mind in which the fact that a thing *is* is perfectly sufficient for us.

"*I am aware*", says Mr. Hyde, "*that the plane of the moral is not ultimate*". But philosophy and religion are concerned with ultimates. They are extreme, or they are worth nothing. "La philosophie", M. Shestov has said, "n'est pas 'Besinnen', elle est lutte . . . Le Royaume de Dieu, ainsi qu'il est dit, s'obtient par la violence". Philosophy is not Reflection, it is fighting . . . The Kingdom of God, as it was written, is obtained by violence. The question is whether or not we experience the Real, and not whether it can be experienced "by pure contemplation" or in some other way. The question is whether or not we attain a certain state of mind, and not whether we can "enjoy" a certain state of mind "on occasion."

THE question is whether we are *extremely* determined to experience the Real. Mr. Hyde should choose. Either he must concern himself with the Real, the ultimate, and leave Morality to take care of itself (and this, in our view, would be to put the horse appropriately before the cart); or else he must concern himself with Morality, and adjourn his quest of Reality *sine die* (and this, in our view, would be to put the cart before the horse. We think he will get nowhere; but at least he will stay where he is in the dignified company of all the traditional moralists and believers of every faith). But he will only go round in circles if he tries to put the horse of Reality and the cart of Morality side by side, and drive them in double harness. Philosophy, we repeat, is an affair of extremes. You are either a monist or a dualist. You cannot pick and choose at will between two philosophies. Yet this is what all those thinkers do who claim to be "aware that the plane of the moral is not ultimate", and who yet seek to retain a distinction between the 'material' and the 'spiritual', a comforting barrier between the realm of 'pure spiritual contemplation' and the harsh physical world of action.

The so-called "moral" problems cannot be usefully discussed until both parties to the discussion have made up their minds. No doubt they can be discussed between two dualists who are both anxious to be "good" and not "bad". But they cannot be usefully discussed between a dualist and a monist, because to the monist they present themselves no longer in the lurid guise of 'spiritual' tests, bristling with transcendental sanctions, but in the simple, merciless and realistic light of problems of behaviour.

The word morality, as everyone knows but few seem to care to remember, is derived from the Latin *mores* = manners.

But the debate which Mr. Hyde and others have carried into these pages will hardly end in our time. The position we are defending, although impregnable, is very hard to explain except to those who already share it; and I can only hope that the

articles in the *Adelphi*, whether critical of our position, like Mr. Hyde's, or explanatory of it, like Mr. Murry's, will bring it into clearer relief than my words have power to do.

R. R.

## *Out of Green*

I HAD forgotten peace and what it meant
to know the branches of the mind unstirred:
to lift a gold note like the hermit bird
out of the leaves and dew and green content.

For always were my thoughts as turbulent
as long grey shadows on the water blurred
by sudden squalls: or the distant thunder heard
across the stunned lake when the storm is spent.

I had forgotten peace—but peace has come
like the sacrament of sunset after rain
when lake and swan are golden and serene.

Love's lonely trail has found a leaf-sweet home
deep in the pristine mind, beyond all pain,
somewhere with gold notes lifting out of green.

DANIEL CORY

## WALDO FRANK

# *Chuquicamata*

AT four of the morning a young man stood waiting on a street of Antofagasta. The darkness was pure with the silence of sea and desert. A Ford spattered its alien confusions against the resistant houses, and came to a stop: the young man stepped in beside the driver, tossing his suit-case into the back seat. The car turned upward from the Pacific and began to climb the black hill.

As León Hidalgo scanned the mineral bareness of the coast it rose into the sky which too was lifeless, its chill fretted by no breath. And beyond the sky stood the stars, tremulous margins of another world. He relaxed in his seat, glad of the driver's silence. He thought of the year behind him. He had been in Paris; he had met the colony of fellow writers. They lived—Blanco-Fombona,* Ugarte, Catá, Calderón, Torres Bodet, Max Jiménez—by a spirit essenced of the will, the tradition, the dynamic energy of their native lands; so erect they were, so creating, yet because America Hispana was supine chaos they lived in Paris or Madrid. He had met Gabriela Mistral, poet of his own Chile: a great, dark woman, wandering through Europe and always bearing Chile, a mysterious treasure, in her fragile hand, a wound in her breast. He had heard her read her poems in which a fire of her Andes seemed to overwhelm the flowers of her valleys: they were like strength saying I am weak, like Chile with its mountains and its vales saying I am landless. Mistral had made him ready to return. On the way he saw New York, and its towers pointing upward seemed to lie, they were not really upward-pointing towers. The brief time he was there, he found himself recalling two villages of

* A compulsory exile, and certain to remain one, so long as his native Venezuela stifles under the tyranny of men like General Gómez.

Chile: one beneath Aconcagua, one, far south in Magallanes. He had written a novel about each of these small places. But now as he walked beneath Manhattan for the first time he understood them. For the stone roofs of the one, within the sweep of meadow submerged by Andes, and the log huts of the other between their image in the placid lake and the pine-murmurous mountain, seemed to him more aspiring, higher . . . than the flimsy skyscrapers of New York. He wondered if the creating of a book would always be merely this: a prelude to self discovery. He took the Grace liner home for Santiago. But as the westward wall of South America broke grim through the morning, as he passed the pitiful towns—Mollendo, Arica, Iquique, Mejillones—slaves of the far mines, sitting desolate on shore, shipping the splendour which their nakedness could never touch, León felt the need to plunge at once into the scoriaceous heart of his homeland. On the impulse, he left the boat at Antofagasta: he found a fellow vaguely connected with his own revolutionary adolescence, who plied the towns between the coast and the great copper mine, Chuquicamata. And now they were on the rim of the desert above the sea. The clay resounded the iron of the motor, the cold air flew behind them as if cogged to the car's wheels. The stars were fading, and the world was black with travail of the day. Now in the east it broke through the night's smooth skin. León felt the thrill of homing as the black air threaded with filaments of light, vitreous-cold and swift, rising from earth, waving from the heights. The sky blanched, a screen of darkness was withdrawn from it and a pale infinity possessed it with which the sun on the mountain edge had no relation.

The car ran across level Atacama. Not a blade of grass, not a hint of breath: this world was sea cursed into clay, and monstrous, so that the vast waste lying before the mountains was but a trough of the sea, and the mountains were waves rigid on the horizon. Upon one wave the sun, a copper spheroid, bulged and burned as

if the air about it were asbestos: changing its shape momently while the solid air through which it pressed deformed it. But gradually the air, no less solid than the desert, grew glazed and igneous; the flame passed from the ball of the sun to the day and the sun, rising, paled. León took off his cloak, his coat and his vest. He opened his collar but the heat seared his throat. With a faint nausea he looked down at the rushing desert. It seemed the scarred inner surface of a cosmic oven.

They passed into the nitrate fields. The waste here was sickly white; dynamited into fragments, it gave the appearance of a leprous face seen through a microscope, and the dark men, picking out the nitrates, were maggots. In the distance were the *salitre* works: erections of the desert. They coughed smoke into the sky which could not absorb it; it hung, an open lesion in the sky's blue flame, bleeding in slow gobs downward back to earth. They came to the town of Unión which serves the camps. The dismal world is broken into blocks that enclose shadow: and men and women crouch through the rainless days, through the staring nights, holding the moisture of their flesh with a mute unconscious fury against the suck of air.

They were rising now and the desert cooled. Far to the east where the mountains kept unfolding in interminable recession, the highest edge was blanketed with snow. The noon sun had suffused until it was co-terminous with day; now myriad particles ran through it—crystalling grains of coolness. They were at Calama, a mile above the surface of the sea: a town buried in dust with grimy houses husbanding their murk, blinking away from the sky. Above them stood the red mountain—Chuquicamata.

At four of the afternoon, León Hidalgo stepped from the car and looked about him. He was in a square on the steep flank of mountain. He was on the brim of a bowl whose bottom was the dead earth filled with the blue-gold poison of the sun. At the higher levels, it was a liquid—translucent, still: below, it co-

agulated into lithic shapes, it writhed and boiled in chemic greens and reds upwards to where he stood. On all sides of the Square León saw streets—rows of single-storied and contiguous barracks. Windowless they faced each other across narrow gutters, with their doors open. León went down one, at hazard. He passed the stench of the latrine at the corner, then stepped through the refuse which the dry air powdered and blew, before the cats and rats could scavenge it. He knocked at an open door. The room was about twelve feet square, a stove in one corner, benches at each wall. A woman was sitting at a table, three children were sitting on the floor. The room was dark, but brighter than these humans; the motions of their hands and heads and eyes were like the grain in some darkly immobile substance.

"Pardon me", said León, "I've come to see a friend—Luis Silvester. Do you happen to know where he lives?"

The woman looked at him from this grey substance of her life: the room was like a swaddling in which her eyes were stifled. A stranger, her eyes said. Good clothes. Money in his pocket. He comes from the world. She looked beyond him through the door.

"Carolina", she called, "Carolina!"

A girl—or a tall child—stood beside him; dressed in a miserable yellow jumper, barelegged, scrawny, but with full breast upstanding. Her neck was lean and ugly; rich hair framed the pale dark face in amber.

"Where does Luis Silvester live?" asked her mother.

"H street; number 27."

"Thank you", said León and saw, as he left, the woman's head beckoning—obscenely eager—to the girl to come in.

The tiny room where Silvester bunked with three other men was empty. León selected the least dirty of the cots, lay down and threw his coat across his chest. The afternoon was silent and cold: only the dim murmur of women and the hum far off of great machines clouded the inhuman clarity of the world. He felt

perched on the crest of a chemic tidal wave whose farthest fume was the sun. He could not sleep; his heart pounded against a wall too tense and thin to hold it, his mouth was dry. "I am in Chile", he kept saying to himself. "This is Chile". Suddenly he looked up. Before him stood the girl Carolina.

"Will you give me five pesos?" she asked quietly.

He tried to study her; she met his gaze with a screen of hard blue calm, more terrible than fear or pain, since it is the corpse of them both.

"Very well", he said. He got up and gave her the paper money.

She took it, closed the door and lay flat on his couch, looking up at him with the same screened eyes. Then he understood.

"Get up", he said, "I don't want that."

She was irritated, as if it were a bother to deal with a man who did not know his mind. With an effort she arose and held the bill to him.

He shook his head and smiled. She frowned, crumpling the money with fingers that opened and shut, the screen of her blue eyes parted just enough for her to peer at him. Then her face brightened.

"Oh", she said, "another time?"

"Another time", he agreed. She placed the bill in her breast, opened the door and left him.

* * *

The miners pressed with shadowed faces against the brilliant morning; up the main street between squalid stores to the open cars, shaped like huge vats, where they stood packed together with only their heads showing. León could see the mine, beyond the "campamiento americano": it was indeed a quarry, a broken mountain that glanced blue and green. He walked from "native town" to the "American section". The houses were neatly painted wood, as much like the United States as they could be: there were even a few trees and flowers, laboriously planted, passionately

nursed. León felt a clutch at his throat as he looked at this "capital" of the Chilean city. These Americans owned Chuquicamata, and ruled its fifteen thousand with an absoluteness which no political high office could ever give to an American at home. They piped the water from its distant source, they brought in the food, they stocked the stores, they hired the police and had their secret spies hidden among the workers. They set the hours of sleep, even the hours and the means of amusement; and their corps of clerks, all good citizens of U.S.A., managed each detail of administration. And the wealth went north where it helped build the fortress-like apartments he had seen on Park Avenue, the mansions of Westchester and Long Island.

All day León wandered over the torn flank of the mountain. He saw the thousands of toilers, he did not speak with them; but he watched them while his thoughts gathered substance. He knew where they came from, these dark submissive natives of his Chile, with their deadlocked bloods. They came from the great estates and the farms; their fathers had pruned the vine and grazed the cattle, their mothers had woven wool and rocked their children in the green valleys of the south. The best of Spain had been theirs, in economic and spiritual order. They had lived under the loom of Andes and of Church, both sending lean but fertile waters down into their lives. But the mines and the nitrate fields, by some claim more mysterious than reason, had commanded them: some claim that rested upon the failure of what Church and Spain had given. They had left their lush valleys, their cozy huts which the sun warmed and the mountains cooled, for this peak of the inhuman desert—deadly Atacama. They lived in squalid closets, ate and slept and wived; and in these festering holes their women bore their children. León on the previous evening had talked long with the men whose room he shared. He knew the vice that mushroomed through the barracks. He knew the way of men who had no women, the way of daughters surrounded by hungry men. He

felt the cancerous black beneath the grey of the streets. And the copper flowed north. These men and women and children gave what they had of life . . . its moment of knowledge and joy in the green earth, its seed of hope . . . and the copper flowed north.

He found himself at the plant. Through a half-mile of continuous structure the dynamited rock of the quarry was transformed into bright ingots ready for ship's bottom. He saw the ore dumped from the electric cars into crushers looming like titans. The cloud of stone-dust roared infernally above them, the powdered and washed rock flowed in sleek sluices through the sifters, and thence into great pools of sulphuric acid. A tall man, whom León at once knew to be an American engineer, was taking a test of the bath. León, who had learned English from his governess as a boy and who had read American textbooks of geology and metallurgy, went up and spoke with him. Soon the son of Boston Tech. and the son of Chile were strolling through the works. They saw the copper electrolytically drawn from the acid into long sheets as thin as paper; they saw it melted, purified by fire, cast. León felt the personal love of this man for his machines. Strange love to him, yet the engineer went on fondly talking as if it were universal. He spoke of the mine's progress, problems of rock strata, of subtle balance in acid composition, of the effect of varying currents in electrolysis; ideals to be achieved in reducing waste, in economy of production. The beautiful machines turning the crude rock into burnished ingots! The pure and self-sufficient cult of the machine!

"Do you get round much to the miners' barracks?" asked León.

The engineer looked at him sharply, as if he had asked a question irrelevant, frivolous, perhaps indecent.

"Oh, no". He suddenly cooled. "We're kept mighty busy. They're taken care of, all right. We have a damn good police force, you know, of our own. Not a chance of trouble. The less one

hears of them, the better. Then we know everything is jake".

He looked at the great iron girders under which the ingots ran, flashing like a necklace in the gloom. He seemed to feel a reproof in the silence of the man at his side. Did the Chilean think, perhaps, he had no eye for anything but machines? He'd show him! He turned and pointed with his head at the world below them. The sun was gone, the desert was deepening and cooling. The eastern cordillera stood against an opal sky, as if it had been lanced from silver: sapphire and ruby stood the nearer mountains from the ashen depth of Atacama, rising like immense reverberations of the cosmic silence.

The engineer pointed with his head.

"Pretty, eh? It's many a half hour I've spent just sitting on the porch up there, doin' nothing—lookin' out on that."

* * *

León went back toward "native town" through the desert passage which separated it from the plant and the campamiento americano. As the night rose from the valley, a cold wind fell from the heights. It blew in his face, blowing the hardness and death of Atacama, and of the workers' barracks, like a rebuke in his face. In Silvester's bunk, the three men squatted near the fire, eating coarse bread and beans. The smoke curved to the open door and the wind blew it back. The single lamp was like a bleary eye, and by it León saw the room as if with the lamp's vision. All day he had struggled; yet he could not compose these dreadful particles of life into a happier world—a world of green and water, of privacy and pride. The barrack room, the many rooms just like it, heavy with men and women, the American camp with its prim painted houses, the machines and the men who served them (priests who had given up the world of human wholeness to serve the perfect fraction that was their science), the empty desert and the empty sky . . . all was a single hardness in his eye, allowing him to see no life beyond it.

The men spoke of a boxing exhibition to be held that night. The American bosses did their best to entertain their subjects, and in up-to-date fashion. Of course, there was the Catholic Church for them that wanted it. But for the forward-looking, there were American movies, there was an Athletic Club run by a money-loyal native. This evening, all "Chuqui" would be there. León lost his friends at the gate, he wanted to be alone. He found a place between the ringside seats where the Americans were comfortably sprawled and the raised tiers of benches ringing the walls of the gymnasium, which held the mass of miners. In the long wait for the show to begin, he was aware of them both. The Americans (he thought of them as "yanquis") were separate, not alone from the Chileans, but from themselves. The men—engineers, executive, clerks—were at least close to one another: a dry defensiveness enclosed them. But they were apart from their women; only the stab of sex, like a sole blade spitting them, held them together. There was a hunger in the women, lean and sharp. It was palpable how far they were from the earth of their bodies, from the earth of their spirit—a deadly farness. And they were separate not alone from the source of their life but from the loneliness of each other. León wondered what the children of these deformed Americans would be. Would their daughters be hardier against life's poisons than the girl Carolina? But doubtless these subtly denatured women took good care not to have children in the high hell of Chile. Behind his back, he felt the muted body of the workers. Submissive yet potent, they were near enough yet to their soil, far enough yet from the power which had brought them here, to be alive. He wandered back to the American group: how did this death control that life? Death sharp and organised against life vaguely inchoate. Beside the engineer with whom he had visited the plant, he saw a man he knew: yes, it was Simeón Alvarez Lanz, rising young lawyer of Santiago. He understood the contact point between the American

and the native. Their eyes met. Simeón's glanced away in a suddenly muffled recognition. Doubtless his firm did the Mine's law business in the Capital—its political business, of course. León grew aware of this third element in the hall: the white-collared Chileans, wreathing as close to the ringside as they could—the native go-betweens for the bosses . . . parasites, procurers . . . he stopped himself. That way led to anger which blinded. He forced himself to dwell with tender clarity upon a young American wife. She was thin and wan; her breast rose too rapidly; she was a woman following her man, giving her life for her man, believing in his gods which surely were not hers. She turned her heavy eyes in his direction, as if her spirit, worn to the quick, were sensitive to any vagrant warmth. Now a man jumped into the ring; a little wiry fighting cock of a Yankee, grey-haired, bearded like Uncle Sam, with bulging roving eyes. He was the master of ceremonies. He began to speak—a fluid horrible tongue. He must have been in Chile many years to speak so fluently; and many miles from it in spirit to speak so badly. This aggressive alien-ness of substance and of accent, fleshed in native words, was a symbol for León. He knew the term "wise-crack"; in New York he had puzzled over the secret patter of the "colyums", and he recognised their lingo transliterated into Spanish. The boss was going to make the natives feel at home. They were one big family. He and his gang in the ringside seats were, of course, the hosts—and the owners. There must be no doubt of that. But we're all good fellows. And to-night it's get together; it's a real fiesta of the manly art. The scrappers will all be native boys, of course. But the spirit of the game is from the North—and say! how these fellers have caught it. You'd think they'd trained with Dempsey. The miners do not laugh: they take the condescending patter humbly, somewhat ill-at-ease, but trying hard to understand and to like it. The boss does not care whether they laugh or not: he is too far from them in spirit to

be aware of more than their quiet—their comfortable quiet. His own group in the front seats are laughing; the natives are behaving: that is enough. He introduces the first fighters.

They are a pair of featherweights from Cobija. Their hearts pump dangerously in the thin high air of Chuqui. They fly at each other with the desperate knowledge that three rounds will punish them far worse than any knock-out. As they draw blood, the crowd warms and coheres. The American women take the sight with a bare lust: they are alone—protected by their men, yet alone. And hungry. They can let their eyes touch the sweating bodies, the bleeding bodies. And the miners in the shadowed benches drink the good fight. They give dark grunts of approval, brief and deep, lapsing again to silence. They are an animal at ease before this feast of rhythmic violence. The boss declares the winner, grows more grotesque in his wisecracks. The mob takes what he says, like a brute that permits a few familiarities, irrelevant and disgusting, to the master giving it a great chunk of meat. The next boxers are larger, less skilful, bloodier. Now the hall is one. The miners have come down in a roar: joined the bosses, joined the bosses' women at this ringside fount of joy. The good sound blows on the flesh, the scuffling limbs, the panting bellies, the sweet mixed wine of sweat and blood: and the real rage at last as the sportsmen forget that they are doing homage to the manly art (for twenty pesos), and lunge murderously at each other. Oh! the good rage of the ring in which the mob dives down as in a well, cleansing itself of all remembering.

León went out. He stood in the empty plaza under the stars, and fought to make bearable this experience of the Mine by bringing it into harmony with some greater measure. The stars stared down: they were millions of petrified days, all the days that had ever been in Chuquicamata, all the days that were to be. They stared at the desert, at the machines and mine, at the barracks and the way of these men. They were harmonious

together—they were one eternity together, and unbearable to León. What could he find in which to place eternity that he might bear it?

He crossed the plaza to the church. He looked at it squat with its Cross catching the glister of the stars. It also fitted in! His boyhood ecstasy was green in his mind: how the Mass had drawn his spirit from his flesh and shaped it to its own transcendant music. Eternity again, and again unbearable. It was the eternity that was evil! The desert, the church, the machines, the mines, the law of men who were the slaves of these, either as masters or as workers—all in this were alike: they had an inhuman form to which human life was mangled.

Eternity was bad because it left man out, because it drew man from the time and flesh which were his substance. Eternity was false!

Man's eternity must be in time; his God must walk the earth in human flesh. No wonder the Church could stand complacent within this industrial hell. Of course, its values were different and fairer; but it was the passive ally of the Machine, since both agreed to denature man from his wholeness, to make his life the means to raise up some fractional impulse, tangenting from wholeness, as the End. No wonder the sordid town, with its black toil and its hideous pleasures, chimed so well with the stars. They were its symbol: cold worlds or flaming, remote from human living.

Let the machine be! and the making of copper and the desert and the church and the stars. But let man make them good by transfiguring them to his own image. That way was his eternity and salvation. León had the greater measure, in which to place his experience and make it bearable. Not man must be denatured into timeless form—iron or desert or heaven: the eternal must become incarnate in man.

He felt that there was someone standing quietly at his side. It was Carolina. But she was different: older and not screened

away in brittle weakness. Younger. She seemed flexed with him, meeting the bright night.

"How long have you been here?"

"Not very long", she said.

They stood in silence, looking at the stars.

"I wanted to give you back your five pesos", she said and did not turn her face.

"I'll take them back."

She handed him the bill and he placed it in his pocket. Then he put his arm around her shoulder.

[Permission to print the above chapter from Mr. Waldo Frank's forthcoming book *America Hispana: a Portrait and a Prospect* (Scribner's, New York) has been exclusively granted to *The Adelphi* by the author.]

## LÉON SHESTOV

# *The Ideal and the Material*

UPON what is our world founded? Upon matter, to judge by appearance. And those who would escape from the might of appearances always come to blows with the materialists. As a rule they win the fight: materialism is annihilated and remains nothing but a philosophy for fools and Philistines. Materialism is heavily defeated indeed, yet after, as before, men are still dominated by the external world. A man still dies unless he has food and shelter; wisdom still goes down before the cup of hemlock; the rough soldier can still destroy Archimedes and his charts. Even the blindest, one would suppose, must come to the conclusion that matter and materialism are not the point. The most dangerous enemy of all animate beings is not inert matter, which in fact, as the ancients taught and as is being taught to-day, is either non-existent, or else exists only potentially as something illusory, pathetic, powerless, appealing everywhere for help; no, the most dangerous and pitiless enemy is—ideas. Ideas and only ideas are the enemy, for him who would fight to conquer the lie of the world.

Matter is the most submissive of creatures. Not only wax can be modelled to our will: even Parian marble yields to the chisel of a Pheidias, until the shapeless block becomes a singing God. We can forge steel, make monuments of bronze, and so forth. And lately matter has even renounced its age-old prerogative of solidity and swirls about together with men under the firmament. Not so ideas. They do not yield, nor suffer man to steal away their strength. Let man try to bid time stand still! Let him try to undo anything that is done, or to coax for a single breach in the regularity of phenomena, such as that a grain of wheat should grow into a cocoa-nut! Or that the hideous Thersites should turn

into the beautiful Achilles! "There's no sense in trying, it can't be done," everyone would say. But if that is so, why do we denounce "inert" matter and take delight in ideas, which, for all their "transparency", are far harder, more intractable and more inert than the deadest matter? It will be asked: what, then, remains for philosophy to do? To make the best of the bad job? That is what philosophy in fact does. It justifies the eternal, immutable ideal order of things and makes psalms and hymns in its honour, and takes that to be its whole purpose and function. The theory of knowledge is a justification and glorification of knowledge, ethics is a justification of the good and so on. Everything is justified for the greater glory of the order of things, *as it happens to be*, and of the world of ideas, as it *happens* to be constituted. . . . Then why not face the logical conclusion? Why not make psalms and hymns to the glory of Chance? But it is the nature of chance to be now one thing, now another. So that if the ordered system of laws or ideas by which the world is governed is a fortuitous one, we may reasonably hope to be released from them through something of a different kind; if not through absolute chaos, in which all things are equally possible, then at least through some dispensation, different from that which has obtained hitherto. And even that would be no small thing!

Perhaps a new dispensation might arise in which wisdom and virtue would triumph over the martyr's stake and the cup of hemlock; and perhaps this dispensation would apply to the past as well as the future, so that Giordano Bruno would prove to have triumphed over the flames and Socrates over Meletus and Anytus. But so long as ideas are "idealised", that is so long as they are hymned and glorified, this can never happen. Therefore, above all, it is necessary to degrade them from heaven and give them a place upon earth, and then not in a temple, but in a back-yard. After which it would be no harm if we were to allow matter to have a short spell in heaven: it should be able to be very happy there

for a time. The result might be that ideas, having no mind to endure undignified proximity, would fly apart in all directions of their own accord. Everything must be tried; but above all, we must cease to trust in ideas and especially in those that are eternal and immutable!

[Translated from M. Shestov's *Auf Hiobs Wage* (Lambert Schneider, Berlin).]

# *Doubting Castle*

OH, Eliot is burning in Carthage town,
And Belloc has burnt his boats,
While everyone's looking at Ronald Knox
Sowing the sceptic oats.
And birds fly high with Chesterton
In chasuble and stole,
And Cherubim and Seraphim
Present a golden scroll,
Wherein is writ
With ready wit
A hearty rigmarole,
Of how the Roman came to Rye,
And how one went to Rome,
Because he wondered when or why,
Or which or where or whom,
And *quis* and *quid* and *quomodo*
And *quare* and *quantum*.

NEIL HUTCHISON

R. L. CHAMBERS

# *M.P. Epimetheus*

## I

THE soul of Sydney Brangwayne, Conservative M.P. for Old Proudford, reclined in a celestial armchair in the Middle Class Club-room of the Elysian Fields, feeling annoyed, which was surprising, as it was Saturday morning, and Saturday, more than any day, was a period of peace in that abode of peace, the middle-class club-room of the Elysian Fields. Now if it had been Sunday, it would have been different; Sunday was admittedly a busy day, quite nerve-racking in fact, for the majority of the middle-class souls, but with the compensation that they were all in the same boat, and it was all in the game. It would not have been so bad if it had been Good Friday or Ascension Day—a middle-class soul might expect a certain amount of disturbance then—but Saturday was *the* day of rest, and the soul of Sydney Brangwayne felt justly annoyed that the last sanctum of its peace and quietness had been invaded.

It had become an almost unwritten law amongst middle-class souls, that Saturday should be spent in quiet conversation, or in browsing over the Celestial Times, or in sleep. It was no uncommon thing to see every soul in the room, souls of business men, members of Parliament, sporting peers—the club was a democratic one—newspaper proprietors, shop-keepers, professional footballers, Americans, critics, women, and cocaine-vendors—every soul in the huge room enjoying the undisturbed sweetness of slumber throughout the whole of that day. For on Saturday it often happened that not a single reference was made to them by their mortal owners. Moreover, in the old days, it did not matter much if a reference was made; it was necessary for a definite thought to be cast in their direction, before the souls need

bestir themselves to see what was the matter with their mortal representatives. A prime-minister's soul had been known to sleep undisturbed for fifty years, an immense contrast with the troubled and harried existence of the despised first-class souls, belonging chiefly to poets and painters, reformers and thinkers generally. They *did* have a hard time, very different from the leisure of the middle-class.

But all this was before the new edict, and before the mortal body of Sydney Brangwayne, M.P., contracted a distressing habit. The new edict, pinned on the club notice-board, as usual, by the Boss, whoever he was—they called him the Divinity in the first-class club—was to the effect that a distressing tendency towards slackness had been noticed among members, and that in order to check this, souls were reminded that the merest reference to them on the part of their owners on earth was sufficient to demand their attention in that quarter. That was bad enough. Mr. Brangwayne made it worse. The approach of middle-age, or the reminders of his wife, or both, induced him to give up the more lurid of the exclamations in which he indulged when annoyed, in favour of the seemingly more innocuous "God bless my soul". I say "seemingly more innocuous", because really it was the cause of all the trouble. The soul of Sydney Brangwayne was annoyed—so annoyed, that it determined on reprisals. Forty calls on Saturday morning was too much for any self-respecting middle-class soul, and Sydney Brangwayne's soul determined to have its revenge by attaching itself permanently to Sydney Brangwayne. Nothing could have been worse for the Conservative member for Old Proudford.

Old Proudford was really a suburb. Otherwise, situated as it was in a north of England textile area, it would not have had a Conservative member of Parliament. Its population consisted largely of mill-owners, retired mill-owners, and intending mill-owners, with their wives and families—so that there was no need

for an election in Old Proudford at all. It had sent back a Conservative member as a rotten borough, and it still sent back a Conservative member. In fact, Mr. Brangwayne was the first Proudfordian M.P. who did not hold the seat until he died of senile decay—thanks to the Boss's new edict and Mr. Brangwayne's new habit.

## II

On a certain Saturday morning Mr. Sydney Brangwayne came home to lunch after a round of golf, looking and feeling pleased with life. The House was closed almost indefinitely—Mr. Brangwayne's party had such a vast majority that there was no prospect of any business for two years or more—and Mr. Brangwayne, who had retired from his mill-owning, had little to do except play golf, which suited him admirably. On this particular morning he had beaten old Silas Higgins, who still ran a business in the town, and thought he could play golf, the old sinner. Moreover, he had at last managed to get the insolent caddy dismissed. The latter, it appeared, was a Socialist—otherwise he would never have dared to address a Member of Parliament as a "bloody old skinflint". Four years in the army seemed to have given some of these fellows ideas above their stations. However, he was gone now, and it pleased Mr. Brangwayne to remember his face as he went. "God bless my soul", he chuckled, "he won't get over that in a hurry", with which pleasing thought he alighted from his runabout at the door of his pleasant detached villa, and went in to meet his wife over a well-earned lunch. Emma noted his good humour with gratitude, took the opportunity to extract a little pocket-money from her appreciative Sydney, and departed to her bridge club, leaving Mr. Brangwayne comfortably settling down for a peaceful afternoon on the lawn. That was where the soul of Sydney Brangwayne came in. Of course an M.P. with a soul, especially a Conservative M.P., is

quite different from an ordinary M.P.—an absurdity in fact, as Mr. Brangwayne's household and friends soon discovered.

That gentleman himself was the first to notice the change, but he didn't say anything. Mrs. Brangwayne noticed it next, but of course she didn't say anything: still, she was worried, Sydney was positively mooning. Mrs. Brangwayne's friends discovered it next, and they did say something, not very much, but quite enough to start a scandal. It began, as Mrs. Higgins remarked, at the bridge club, on the Sunday after Sydney played golf with Silas for the last time. "He seems to have quite given up the game, my dear, though Silas said he ought to be in the running for the club handicap this year. However, as I was saying, it was the day after that, wasn't it, that I was speaking about? Did you see him in church? Oh! of course you weren't there that week, were you? Well, believe me, the man looked positively ill, well, not ill exactly, if you know what I mean, but not quite himself. Never said a word all through the service, never sang a single hymn, and he has such a good voice, you know—and then, during the sermon! It was the Bishop that week, you know, and he was appealing for funds for the foreign mission field. Quite a stirring address; I remember particularly how he said that it didn't matter how hard-up we were, or if we were unemployed. I remember thinking that that was rather unnecessary at St. John's; now if it had been at All Saints' down in the town. However, as I was saying, I noticed Sydney getting more and more restless all through the sermon, and would you believe it? he didn't put anything in the collection plate, and he's usually good for a pound note, when the Bishop's there. No, my dear, not a penny; scandalous, I call it, and he rushed straight out of church and hurried off home, and never said a word to anyone. He's been queer ever since, too—overwork, I expect—it must be a strain being in Parliament with all these horrible Socialists about. However, I believe it's my turn to play, isn't it?" That

was the beginning, but it was by no means the end.

To go back to the fateful Saturday afternoon. Mr. Brangwayne had awakened at five o'clock feeling depressed. It must have been the lobster-salad, at lunch-time, he decided, and then—no, it wasn't, it was that wretched dream. He had thought he was on a golf course—at least, he was carrying two sets of clubs—and there were lots of people that he knew playing, and suddenly they all came to him and piled their clubs on to him, and told him to caddy for them; and he had objected, he remembered, and the next thing he knew he was running miles and miles, over fairway and bunkers and rough, pursued by an angry crowd of his own friends, chasing him furiously, and shouting, "Bloody old skin-flint, we'll skin him!" until he was terrified. He shuddered as he thought of it; yes, it was a good thing he had been roused before they got him. They were positively slavering with fury. Oh, well! it was only a dream anyway. "Bloody skinflint"—where had he heard the expression before? Lots of places, of course, but where recently. Oh! the caddy he had had dismissed. H'm, perhaps it had been a bit hard on the man. Still, he had undoubtedly been insolent. But he looked so blessed miserable afterwards. Ah well, somebody had to suffer, and it was usually the under-dog, thought Mr. Brangwayne, as he went in to a solitary tea, Emma being still at the bridge club.

"Usually the under-dog", he repeated to himself, as he went in. Then quite unexpectedly, "Why in Hell should it be?" He looked round, wondering who had said that. Himself, he supposed; he must be getting jumpy, sun on his head, or something. Still, some poor devils never saw the sun, cooped up all day down in those beastly mills. He remembered that as a young man, when he first went into his father's business, he had suggested altering things. He'd soon given up that idea when they laughed at him. Beastly habit people had in those days of laughing at him. He never could stand it. He had given up lots of things because of

it, and now, he supposed, with a sudden ironic laugh that startled him again, he was doing the same as they had done, his father and old Higgins and the rest. Young Robert, at present at Cambridge, had shown a lamentable tendency towards what he called "the arts", and his father "high-falutin' nonsense". Sydney had finally told him that unless he buckled down at the end of the year, and took over the junior partnership in the firm which his father's retirement left vacant for him, he would find himself out of favour, out of funds, and out of a job—like the caddy, thought Mr. Brangwayne, with a sigh. Oh! damn the caddy, damn that dream! He'd put a stop to it, anyway. He'd get the fellow put back in his job, if he had to apologise to him in person. He'd feel better for it, and anyway he would give up golf. He was doing too much, and it led nowhere. Soul-killing, that's what it was, he thought, soul-killing; same old game with the same old people, same smutty jokes and bar scandal. One got into a rut. He supposed he was in a rut, had been ever since he gave up business last year, or even longer than that; ever since the war, ever since he had been respectable and they had stopped laughing at him. But what could he do about it? It was too late now, and he realised, suddenly, that he was thinking on dangerous lines.

What would Emma say? She was another who had laughed. She'd laugh again. "Let her laugh", said Mr. Brangwayne, aloud, and then looked round guiltily. What had he said? He was an old fool to go on like this about a dream. Still, he would see about the caddy fellow, he didn't want to play any more golf, not as he had been doing at least, and he would try to come to some agreement with young Robert. At this point Emma returned and cut short his meditations by a reminder that he ought to be getting ready for dinner. Kirton was coming, and Sydney must talk to him about Robert's partnership. "Nonsense!" said Sydney sharply, and that was Mrs. Brangwayne's first

intimation of the change. She had not time to say much before dinner, and all she could get from Sydney was "Nonsense! let the boy have his own way. Never had mine. Look at me now. Soul-killing!" She did her best, and determined to have it ou. later. Later was when the Kirtons had gone, with the business of Robert's partnership still undiscussed. Having it out with Sydney proved strangely unsatisfactory, and Sydney unusually stubborn. The upshot of it was that he definitely refused to "wreck the boy's life", and Emma dissolved into tears. They went to sleep in an uncomfortable silence, and Mr. Brangwayne had his second dream.

This time he thought he was a hangman, and during the night he stretched hundreds of necks at a pound per neck. And every one of his victims had eyes like a spaniel, and blasphemed like a bargee. "Bloody old murderer", they called him, just as the crowds had shouted at him during the lock-out two years ago. Then the white cap silenced them; a moment's adjustment and they were gone—hundreds of them—for he was amazingly efficient. The trouble was he could see their eyes through the cap, and they made him feel ill. Hundreds of eyes, just looking at him. Oh God! why didn't they stop, even when they were gone? He could still see them, staring at him from all round. They were still there when he awoke, still there when he went to church; every word of the Bishop's sermon seemed a mockery. How could he bother with foreign missions when those eyes were there? So he rushed off home, leaving Emma to make his excuses. Sydney was not well. " Quite" was the reply, expressed with just enough politeness to show complete disbelief.

However, when Emma got home, it appeared that Sydney was definitely not well. He had decided, he said, that sitting on the bench in the local police court was a soul-killing occupation, and was writing his resignation. Emma pleaded, stormed and threatened, all to no purpose. Eventually she asked him why, and then

the real trouble started. "Oh, I don't know" Sydney said. "All those poor devils up for petty theft; you can see they are pretty far gone, out-of-work as often as not. Then there were the rioters during the lock-out. Six months each we gave them. God knows what their wives and kids did before they came out. And talking about kids, there was the girl we had up last week. We committed her for infanticide."

"Perfectly right, too, the hussy", rejoined Mrs. Brangwayne.

"Yes, but she looked so damned sorry for herself, and come to think of it, she reminded me of Lucy."

"Lucy!", gasped Mrs. Brangwayne. "You dare to stand there and bring her name up after more than twenty years. I warned you when we were married you'd have to give her up, and here you are still going on about her. I shouldn't wonder if you still write to her."

Sydney started, and hastily covered up an envelope on the desk, but Emma was too quick, and in a moment the two were engaged in a fierce struggle for the letter. Sydney proved the stronger, and very soon Emma began to cry.

"Oh, don't cry", he besought her, "it's the first I've written for years, and I've only asked her how she has got on since I was forced to leave her and marry you. I wondered if she'd been in the same boat as that girl at the court"—Then he stopped aghast, but Emma didn't give him time to retract. After a moment, when she was nearer to hysterics then ever in her life, she turned icy cold, and in a dead voice said, "After that, Sydney, either you leave the house or I will."

Before he realised it, Sydney Brangwayne was walking down the road to the station.

III

The rest of the story was best told by the soul of Sydney Brangwayne, as it reclined for a hard-earned rest in the middle

class club-room of the Elysian Fields. At least, it was not really the soul of Sydney Brangwayne, but just one of the few "Middle-class souls unattached", waiting for a new appointment, though it was still known as Sydney B. to the rest of the club. You see, by this time, the mortal part of Sydney B. had ceased to exist.

"Now, as I was saying", went on the soul of Sydney Brangwayne, in its usual rather vulgarly hearty tone, "if there's one thing a middle-class can't stand, it's his soul. Not that they dislike us consciously, don't misunderstand me—it's simply that they have forgotten we exist, and if they do bump into us unexpectedly, well, one of us has to look out. Now, when I went out after Sydney, I knew there was just a risk of finding myself landed in class *one. But it was a hundred to one against it,* as I've *proved*". Sydney B. paused impressively, and then, "I warn you all; you can't take up with your mortals unless you're prepared either for class one for yourselves, or a sticky end for them. Poor old Brangwayne! He got it all right, though I'm not saying he didn't deserve it. Now his son Robert is different. Same stock, you may say, same surroundings, same fibre. Yes, but imagination, that's what he's got, and that's why poor old Robert B. is one of the busiest class ones. But he'll settle down all right. At present his soul runs to pastel shirts and bad poetry —very bad poetry—and good philosophy, which will save him eventually, if it doesn't take him poor old Sydney's way. You see, he has a chance; Sydney hadn't. You can't put a soul into an M.P. He's too full already of cast-iron rules and concrete traditions. He either hasn't any knowledge, or he has forgotten it with his honesty, so that what I found when I went for old Sydney was a completely ignorant man—no worse than anyone else in his political circle, rather better than the prime minister and cabinet, and streets ahead of the war office, but nevertheless, an ignorant man, a mindless man. Now if he'd had a space where his mind should have worked, I could have popped in there. But he hadn't;

he'd filled it with public school teaching and political and social propaganda. Naturally, I couldn't face that sort of thing; it might have taken years to make any impression there. So what I did was to get hold of his sub-conscious mind, as the psychologists call it. Now, in an M.P., just as in anyone else, only more so, the sub-conscious mind is connected with the digestion, and when I got settled in Sydney's most sensitive spot, I tickled him up beautifully. The immediate results were bad dreams, and that seemed to react on his conscience. Now you see my methods. His conscience was what I had been after. At first it looked as hopeless as his mind space, rusty and out of use; but at least it wasn't as completely inundated by religion as his mind was by education, so I saw mychance. If I could move anything, it was his conscience, and by George, I did."

Sydney B. stopped for a sip at a nectar and soda, and then proceeded to an interested audience. "He started famously—something about a golf caddy whom he'd had sacked. He apologised to get the man his job back. Of course that looked peculiar, and didn't go down very well with his friends, especially as he followed it up by resigning from the local bench, then leaving his wife, then retiring from Parliament, and finally, disappearing. The trouble with his wife was about an old flame of his—girl he knew before he married her. Well, it appeared he knew her better than Emma ever suspected, and he let her know it—just couldn't help it with me inside him. Of course he had to leave her, and he went up to town to arrange a divorce, settled most of his money on his wife and son, resigned from Parliament, and disappeared. They tried to hush it up, but it caused quite a sensation, especially when Old Proudford nearly returned a Socialist at the by-election.

"That was that, and so far I was having a pretty good time, but it struck me that Sydney was clearing a lot of junk out of where his mind ought to be, and pretty soon he began to think. That was after he'd knocked about the thin end of London for a bit.

It shocked him, he wasn't used to it. I began to feel a bit nervous about my prospects of class one. Worst of all was when he started reading—improving his mind, he called it, and going to concerts and picture galleries; of course I knew when I started that it would come eventually. Even an M.P. uses a soul if it's pushed on to him, but I thought it would be years and years before I had to start working for Sydney. Evidently I was wrong; he went through the whole evolution ten times as quickly as I thought he would. To start with, his resignation made it easier. Plain Sydney Brangwayne might as well be a Class One as anyone. I misjudged him, but then who can blame me, seeing that such a thing has never happened before? He positively took the bit between his teeth, and slipped straight through thinking into feeling before I could collect myself. It was a good thing for me that he'd never been taught to think. Incidentally, if he had, none of this would ever have happened.

"However, ignorance was so rooted in him by generations of tradition, that all his feeling didn't lead him to the final stage of a Number One soul. He had to go back again and start learning to think. It's funny to imagine him, middle aged, going through all the mental and spiritual evolution that a Class One spends his life on—and trying to do it in a year. You see what I mean; something was bound to go, and it did. Inculcated English inanity was too much for him; his brain couldn't cope with it, and he turned a little strange, not really mad, you know, but rather *distrait* and queer.

"He was well-known in Chelsea, and there was quite a feeling of regret when it was known he was dead. Yes, knocked down by a bus—he was reading poetry in Tottenham Court Road. The papers called it a tragedy, but it wasn't; you see, it was Kipling, that was as far as he had got. What's more, he couldn't have got any further. If it hadn't been a bus, it would have been something else. You can't have members of Parliament, or even ex-members

of Parliament, developing a personality and a soul. I suppose it's the Boss's idea, and it certainly suits me". Sydney B., or rather second-class unattached, rang for the waiter. "Nectar and soda, please", was his order.

"Make it two, and put them down to me", said a new comer. Sydney B. looked up. "Well, if it isn't young Robert B.! What in Heaven are you doing here?" "Oh, my young man has gone into the business, now that your old one is finished", explained young Robert, "so I've handed in my resignation to the Boss, and joined up here for a rest. I suppose I shall get used to doing nothing eventually. Well, chin-chin, good luck with your next mortal. And now for forty winks and a bit of peace". Robert B. drew up a chair to the fire, and the club-room sank back into its silence.

A. L. ROWSE

# *Sunday Evening at Bethesda*

THE ugly village on the hillside, grey and granite, is curiously quiet. The large white barn of a building, with blind red windows to the western sun, its brow overlooking the village, is the temple which assembles them all to-night. As if a hand had drawn them forth from their separate cells, and the prisons that are their houses, are for this hour emptied. The street is deserted except for a few unsabbatarian vagrants; and of these I am one.

Within that shut box they are all singing hard as if to lift the roof off with their voices. *Tell me the Old, Old Story*, they sing, beginning low and rising high and higher to a shout. One would think they were so content, singing lustily and with a will. But what is it they want to exorcise from their minds? They sing for all the world as if there is something they want safety from, finding some security in their unison. What is it they fear, that they would seek refuge and respite in the loud singing of a hymn?

So strong is the fortress of their unity that nothing would break, it seems, the impulse of their singing. *Tell me the Old, Old Story* rings out across the hillside and over the quarried village. There is nothing else in all the evening to hear. No bird that sings; no grasshopper's shrill cry in the browse, though it is evening and late summer; no waters running down to the sea. Only the inhuman voices within the temple.

How should they conceal the perils they suffer, what backbitings, what slanders, what miseries, what passions, what lusts.

Here such a one, who loved unwisely and too young, was cast out. Yet another nursed a secret anguish and was brave. A third died by his own hand and they drew a veil across his memory, yet could not forget him. He found no peace.

The singing grows dim at last in the distance; the shoulder of

the hill is between us. I can no longer hear them.

Yet shall the voices go on though the bodies change.

This is their justification, that even as they sing, Death reaches out the shadow of a wing over them, and one by one they shall fall into the negligent sleep of oblivion; and there is nothing to save them.

## *Dream of the End of the World*

I HAD arrived at a high place overlooking the sea. As I came through the undergrowth of the wood, I heard the inrunning tide and the warning of the wind. This was the place I remembered where once I had stayed under the trees until the evening fell: in the shadow of the hollows, until the trees themselves grew sentient, and reached their mute arms towards me into the coming night, and I could bear it no longer and fled. To-night I stumbled from the path, and there were the mute outstretched branches that caught me as I passed. And as I ran, I heard the breaking of the sea upon the cliff: the voice of the sea ran in my ears and in my blood.

Then I emerged upon the high place. And across the plain of the sea, in the eastern heaven, two stars gleamed and fell and rose again, announcing some unknown message to the world. While I gazed, I remembered the three trees on the hill's brow in the evening, under the flying clouds. And I knew that in the fleeting clouds Lent hurried on to its appointed term, and there was the image of One hanging on a tree against the evening. This was his Golgotha, under the crescent moon. All the slopes ran down to the sea, and the world was slipping away, and I grasping the perilous edge. A gull laughed, and mocked the turning world.

And while I gazed, more stars came out and more until the heaven was like a field of flowers. "*See, see where Christ's blood streams in the firmament*", I cried. And there were little rivers that

ran among the starry flowers, and dropped like flames into the sea. And the heaven of stars ceased not to glow, but all the flowers sang together until the night was like the day.

A presence moved behind me in the grove of trees; and I was afraid. There was a voice that spoke, full of all desire and content, that answered my unspoken need: *This is the end of the world.*

"*This is the end*", I said. And I became one with the whole earth.

## *The Exceptional Fräulein : 1913-14*

GRETCHEN, I love thee.
My heart, how I love thee!
Yet marry thee, Gretchen?
I would not undo me.
Liefer I'd lie with the wind in yon pine-tree,
Or souse my five wits in the surge of a wine-sea.
Live with thee, red pennon? I'll not be so tied to thee.
Die for thee, Gretchen? How daily I die for thee,
Chiding, bewildered; yet far from thee sigh for thee.
Thou art so wild, and I so dependent,
Seeking quiet comfort in love unresplendent.
For thou art—God knows!—a tile cat, a moor bee,
A plume in the wind. Wave! Why should I down-drag thee?
For is it not plain? Grief and pain will unflag thee,
Steal the light from thine eyes, and put stings in thee, honey-bee.
And I love thee, my wild one. Flee, flee from me. Flee!

HERBERT E. PALMER

AMABEL WILLIAMS-ELLIS

# *Red Commune*

## I

EVERY day for a whole fortnight, Shubin went flying up from the five o'clock dinner, scooted along the hostel passages without speaking to anyone, and banged the dormitory door after him. That was his way of getting first read of the yellow manual on the Fordson and International tractors.

Plumping down on the chair with three legs, and propping the book open on the table before him, he settled his fingers in his hair, and his elbows on the table, with a single movement.

The book always opened at the big double-page diagram that gave the complete workings. Carburettor, cooling system, ignition, cylinders, pistons, and sparking plugs, lay before him in profusion, while the page was further enriched by innumerable arrows and key letters. It was a feast!

The wall model, that hung in the class-room, was certainly easier to understand—for instance, the cylinder cases lifted off—besides, there were special diagrams of such queer shaped things as the gasket. But all the same Shubin liked the manual better, because he had it to himself. He did not even study it all the time, but let his eyes roam and gloat over it.

But Pavel's contemplation was not all ecstatic. He had soon got what he considered a pretty good grip on the double-page diagram. After a day or two, he bent the book back at a fresh place, and studied the transmission. He reminded himself with peculiar pleasure that the multiplate worked in an oil bath.

When the other boys came up, all the notice that Shubin took of them was to stick his fingers into his ears. As he had anyway, got the chair with three legs, no one particularly wanted to turn

him off it, and as the boys never scrubbed, and seldom swept, their floor, there was nothing to disturb him—Zakar or Nicholai generally for instance settled down to practising "Black Eyes" on the mandolin. If the others started fighting and actually bumped into him, he hit out in an absorbed sort of way.

That whole fortnight Vaska Petrov was the president of a candidates' court for the Barlashovo Pioneers, and had to go off every evening directly after dinner.

Vaska naturally used to snatch the book away from Shubin directly he got in. But half the time, no sooner had he got his nose into it than Lebedeva or Titkova would come into the boys' room after him. These two, Anna and Jenny, were forever wanting to ask Vaska this or that—Anna Lebedeva serious, with big grey eyes and heavy feet; Jenny Titkova, quick and forgetful.

Pavel would lie in bed, with his arms under his head, watching out of slanting eyes, how Vaska rumpled his hair at them, trying to be helpful and comradely, but at the same time wanting to get on with his own work.

Pavel had decided some time ago that it was Vaska's own fault if he was in a muddle and got behind with his work. He would fail to get his proficiency certificate at the end of the summer term; perhaps that would teach him not to be so damn public-spirited.

There was another thing that Pavel had decided. Girls were no use. There wasn't one that he couldn't make circles round. What was the good of Anna pretending that she took politics, and the Mechanisation of Agriculture, seriously? You'd only to look at the girls' dormitory. There were actually coloured counterpanes and white pillow-cases on the beds, and plants in the windows. In the evening, if Pavel chanced to put his head round the door expecting one of them to be working, he would quite often find that instead, she had pulled off her boots, and had got down on her knees to scrub the floor.

The high school hostel wasn't a crêche! Anna scrubbed floors and did needlework in the senseless way they had, and at the same time took herself quite seriously, and thought that she was going to qualify in Mechanical Transport, besides taking the ordinary agricultural course. Anna was nineteen, but in her first high school year, through having begun a year later than Pavel or Vaska. That had been through bourgeois prejudice as well. She had nursed a sick mother or something. She would find that a student has not got time for sentiment. Obviously it was only because of the idiotic policy of encouraging females that Anna would be promoted to the senior class next term. That softy Vaska was trying to help her on, and all the while getting behind in his own stages.

At first Pavel reasoned with Vaska. That was what a fellow's friends were for, to prevent him making a fool of himself. Pavel could always feel satisfied that he had warned and reasoned with him. Fruit tree grafting, and soils, Vaska had barely touched, and though he was up on plant genetics, he was away down on the Fordson and International.

But Vaska took no notice, and nothing was altered. He used to go out to the villages and help with propaganda meetings, and have long arguments about Marxian ethics with the peasants.

After a while, Pavel gave over. He decided in his mind that Vaska had an itch for it, and would always be the same, worrying about other people instead of getting on with the job.

Pavel tore him out of his heart. They could not be travelling companions any longer, for Pavel Shubin was determined to get on, and Vaska Petrov seemed to have stuck at the side of the road.

So Pavel was scarcely sorry when, as the short spring holiday drew on, it seemed that Vaska would soon have put himself out of the running on Mechanised Agriculture.

For weeks Pavel cast his eyes up and sniffed the wind as he dashed along the Barlashovo streets between the school and the

hostel. The end of February came, and the snow still lay. He was satisfied that down on the Communal Farm they wouldn't have been able to get on to the ground at all. "Has the ploughing begun yet?" he would ask the men who came over. Every day or so there was someone to ask, for Barlashovo was not simply the town where ten or a dozen of the big boys and girls from the "Commune" attended the Agricultural School. It was also the place where the Commune produce was put on rail.

"Has the ploughing started yet?" In the second week in March not a furrow had been drawn.

So it gradually became sure that when the two or three days of the half-term spring holiday came, the Commune would still be hard at it ploughing. Then who (calculated Pavel) would be so likely to get the chance of actually working one of the tractors as the senior boy from the High School?

## II

Pavel lay on his bed with his arms behind his bullet head, and loosed himself on a train of imagination. His eyes narrowed as he fixed them upon a particular crack in the ceiling, his hands curved themselves to certain imagined touches.

Sometimes his dream would be of a Fordson, sometimes it would be of an International.

Petrol, paraffin, lubricating oil, water. Flood her, set the controls. Then the stoop sideways, and a cold grip. Then—with all his weight—a smooth heave, suddenly jerked off short. Three heaves of the starting handle were always enough as he lay there on the bed.

After the third, there was a roar, and the tractor quivered. Running round, Pavel in his dream leaped into the driving saddle. He sat listening for a moment with his head on one side. Then—judiciously and understandingly—he raced her. At last,

satisfied that all the cylinders were firing, he stooped to release the brake.

Then lifting his eyes and straightening his whole body, he laid his hand on the wheel. Slowly, as he let in the gear, shaking with the force of her suppressed vigour, the tractor moved forward.

Sometimes they had a long way to go, in Pavel's visions, and he would sit reigning there, while the machine crawled obediently forward under the sky.

But sooner or later the supreme moment came when he turned and set down the noses of the coulters, and—at last exerting her force—the tractor drew the three ploughs after her.

When that moment came in reality, Pavel was sure that he would have nothing left to wish for.

The black earth would be streaming behind him, gleaming and falling compactly in obedient waves.

Other men would sow presently, for such is the progress of the seasons, but already the very earth was black—the colour of bread. As he travelled, weeds and patches of snow were swallowed and obliterated. Nothing was the same after Pavel Shubin and the tractor had passed.

Birds followed in a circling mist, clouds drifted, or stood still in the sky, but Pavel and the tractor were not affected.

They drew the triple line of furrows after them, and it lay on the earth as a broad brush full of chocolate paint lies across the helpless canvas. Snorting, Pavel and the tractor drew the broad, dark line along, until the barns and byres of the Commune were out of sight behind them, and there was nothing left in the world but Pavel, two flanged wheels, the shaking vigour of the engine, and the turning waves of the earth.

## III

Shubin had actually got into the leading cart.

He had clambered over a mound of groceries and petrol cans, and had sat down on a box of tea next to the old horsekeeper, who was driving. Pavel chose him because he had been in America and could be coaxed into telling about how they lived there. Suddenly—just as Pavel's stern touched the tea chest, he remembered those accursed books!

He had obediently tied up the bundle the day before. They were reading primers for peasants. Pavel was supposed to be going to "combat illiteracy" during the four days of the spring holidays, by organising a New Cell—otherwise, by getting a few peasants to promise to come once a week and be taught to read and write, and then getting some simpleton to promise to come and teach them. Now the nasty little books had got themselves left behind. Pavel had one last look in his sack. Nothing in it except a towel, a tooth mug, and the Fordson book. Pavel hesitated, swore, plunged off the cart, raced up the street to school, and tore back with the books to where a short cut brought him out further along the road. He was just in time to see the back of the last cart. He ran after it, held on, and, still running, looked up to see the faces of Jenny and Anna—about the last people he had meant to take the journey with.

The horses were trotting on a short down slope; he jumped; Anna frowned but made room, and Jenny giggled and reached out a hand as he sprawled and clutched. As he wriggled himself on, the thought that she had nice teeth came into his mind. At last he was in, breathless and cheerful. It was no good asking these fools of girls about America, they remembered nothing that was interesting. But who could be cross! He grinned as he took off his old sheepskin cap, and rumpled his stubby, black hair. What a morning!

The snow had gone at last, but there had been a mist earlier, and a frost in the night so every tree they passed was a glittering jet of white hoar frost against the bleached earth. The sky was

pale at the horizon, but above them it was as blue as a harvester's shirt, on one cheek the sun was warm, the other tingled.

He looked along the line of carts.

Vaska and Zahar had started up "Black Eyes" and "Broad are the Steppes" on the accordion and the two balalaikas. It was good to be out of doors. Land! When he quit school it would be like this every day! The line of carts clattered down to the river and over the bridge, then slowed down to a walk as they pulled up the slope on the other side. The road led steeply up the bank, the horses strained—then in a moment they had left the river, and in front of them—beyond the glittering trees and the huts of the village—there stretched away the brindled steppe banded with streaks of snow. Behind them, Barlashovo lay down by the ice-bound river, the turbaned domes of its churches shining in the sun.

The Commune carts had come into Barlashovo the night before with loads of live pigs, hides, birch and poplar logs, and the rest of the honey. They generally managed things like that.

For more than a week they took nothing down to the railway, then, when the last day before a holiday came, they took in everything there was to sell. Then all the boys and girls from the Commune Hostel rode home in triumph in the clattering, empty carts—they and their mandolins and squiffers.

Occasionally the road was good, but more often it was bad. In the spring, and also going back to school in the autumn, that fourteen versts was very bad. It was not too good in the winter either, if there had been a wind and the snow had drifted. With a bad road it took three, or even four, hours to drive the fourteen versts. They brought the heavy horses then—the plough horses, the ones that were used for hauling timber—and not the mares and geldings that Red Boris had sired.

They were left in the stable when the road was bad. They were a light footed, round quartered lot, compact and springy, with

good necks and wide nostrils. The four or five year olds had been begotten in the years of Red Boris' glory, when he won the open trotting championship at Kursk.

Those had been the years when the Commune had still been struggling against adversity. The two last batches of re-emigrants had only just managed to get back from America and Australia. Of course, from the moment they heard of the Revolution most of these people, who had been exiled for their opinions, wanted to be in it all. Somehow they had raised the money to get back to what was at once their old home and the Promised Land. Jenny Titkov, Vaska, and his big sister Katya had been among the children who had been brought back to Russia by the re-turned exiles, their parents.

The new people had lived so long abroad that they had not remembered how necessary it was to have felt boots, and they had not brought any proper sheepskins either. Some of them had lain in bed for weeks with bronchitis. There had been besides that, scarlet fever, and worse still, swine fever in the piggeries. Jenny, Vaska, and Katya, who had all been born abroad, wondered if Russian winters ever came to an end.

Everyone felt that the black stallion had stood by the Commune that year. He had often had to work just as if he had been a common gelding. Then later, after all their hard times, he had brought honour to the whole Commune by winning at Kursk.

He was a fine horse even now. Only last season he had come in second at Barlashovo.

The carts jolted on. The spring made everyone feel happy. Faint music drifted back to Pavel, Anna and Jenny at the tail of the line of carts winding along over the steppe. There was hay at the bottom of the cart, and presently Pavel hitched up his legs that were dangling, and lay down on his back. The line of carts jingled across the plain, the wooden arches over the horses' heads looked triumphal with sprigs of evergreen. Pavel dozed.

The girls, who had been silent, presently forgot him, and began to talk across his outstretched legs.

## IV

Saransk, though it was only two versts away from the Commune, looked as if it had come out of a different world. The village was like an uncombed head, the street irregular, the houses leaning this way and that, the straw of the thatches awry.

Pavel and Vaska sat down on a sledge behind a barn, and divided up lists, which were headed "Campaign for the Liquidation of Illiteracy. (Ag)."

They separated, one taking one side of the street and one the other.

Pavel went from hut to hut. In the living-rooms new born calves and lambs lay on the straw. From up on the stove old dotards stirred and mumbled. There was often hardly any furniture—often no bed.

Going through the barn to speak to Annushka Ropina, who was on his list, he met her with the yoke on her shoulders, a gaunt woman, stooping to pick up the buckets on her way to the well.

He had seen her before, but not for a long while. Pavel thought her rather old. It was not much good trying to teach peasant women reading once they were over thirty. But her name was on the list, so he had to say something.

So he began to tell her about the reading class that was being formed in Saransk, and spoke of the wonderful advantages of being able to read and write. She did not let him finish.

"No", she said. "My Stephan would never let me learn". She shut her mouth.

"You don't have to do just as your husband thinks nowadays, stupid woman", Pavel answered, standing on one leg.

"Fiddlesticks!" she said, in her rasping voice, and picked up the second bucket.

"Under Soviet law, men and women are equal in all respects", Pavel growled contemptuously.

Annushka looked at him, and jerked her head to indicate that she was not going to stand there any longer. They both turned to go towards the well.

They walked between the peasants' huts. The village was so humble and desolate, it seemed as if nothing in it would ever be changed.

"Annushka", he said. "You'll never help build up Socialism if you don't stand up for your rights."

"You are teaching the people in this village to read. Very well! But don't think you can teach them everything". She walked with her feet apart and her toes turned out. "You weren't here in the bad times. All you young lot that's let loose from the Commune now were born in America". She nodded her head. "So it stands to reason that you can't understand my old man."

"You stupid old cow! travelling helps you to understand people!"

"No, it doesn't", she said. "I understand him all right through. Before the revolution we lived peacefully. Stephan was an upright old man. He didn't get drunk or beat me more than he should". She paused in her walking and stood and looked at Pavel, as a cow looks with lowered horns.

"How the hell would it harm him for you to learn to read? You might help him with all the buying and selling, and the grain collection."

She brushed that aside, staring past Pavel.

"What sort of a life has my old Stephan had? He wasn't a young man when all this trouble began. He had to fight hunger, he had to fight the enemy, he had to fight the bandits. He did, too. We didn't starve, we weren't burned, we weren't

slaughtered". She fixed her sunken eyes on Pavel.

"Then your Commune settled down near us. Since then not month has passed, Pavel Shubin, without a decree that tells n old man that he's wrong! He was wrong to love the Tsar, he w wrong to cross himself before the icons, he was wrong in the w: he set his onions—the way he fed his horses was wrong, and : was the way he ploughed. He was to prefer a tractor that he h: never seen; he was never to be sure it was time to sow till he h: asked that silly young Gorelov at the Commune!" She paused

Pavel was seeing how far he could dribble a chip of wood alo the road.

"All his children by Marfa are dead. He's only got my lit Marusia. Think I'd darken his last days by learning to read?"

Annushka walked the few last steps to the well and set dov her buckets. Pavel stood and watched her.

Annushka did what she had done every day since she w grown. She pulled down the hinged beam that now (parallel the tall post) held the hook and chain up in the air. She hung bucket on the hook, dipped beam and bucket into the well, ai hauled her bucket to the side when it was full. She repeated t sequence a second time, and then let the weighted beam swing ı again. Then she stooped, hooked the buckets on to the yoke, aı straightened herself under the weight. She plodded off withou look at Pavel, her skirts drabbling in the freezing mud, her he: in its faded mauve handkerchief held high.

When they compared lists, Vaska had enrolled six illiterat and Pavel only three.

"I simply hate these cows of peasant women", said Pavel.

"You mustn't hate them", said Vaska earnestly. "That's a Le Deviation—Trotskyism. We're not to exploit the peasants, b to collaborate with them in building a Socialist State."

"Oh, hell!" said Pavel. "The damned old stick-in-the-mud They always think they know best and they don't! They'

wrong! Wrong all the time!"

"What do you mean?" said Vaska.

"That's what I mean", said Pavel, pointing.

It was evening, and the cattle were being taken down to drink. Down one track the Commune cattle were coming—plump, seemly beasts—some lowing a little, the young ones frisking and kicking up their heels, excited to be outside after the dim byre. Twenty or thirty head were driven by two boys and a dog. From the village, down another track, the peasants' cows were coming up, one cow thinner than the other, hair rubbed off their flanks, hoofs wanting paring, and a queer, lopsided look about most of them, bent horns, twisted necks, dropped quarters. Almost each cow had a child or an old woman to drive it. There would be at most a cow and a calf, or a pair of young beasts to each human.

"That's what I mean", said Pavel.

Annushka had made him feel sulky, but at the sight of the cows he was triumphant again.

"I'd know the difference between a Commune beast and a peasant beast anywhere! And it's the same with the horses and the pigs and the crops as well. You could hang your cap on those cows' hips. If that doesn't prove who's right, what does?"

Vaska nodded, his face serious.

There was no getting past it.

[*Red Commune* is part of a story, *Those High-School Children*, which will appear in a volume of short stories dealing with the human aspect of the Russian Revolution, entitled *Volcano*, by Mrs. Williams Ellis. It will be published, price 7*s*. 6*d*., in the early autumn by Messrs. Jonathan Cape.]

## *Hymn to the Sun*

"VOY wawm " said dustman
one bright August morning—
But that was in Longbenton,
under the trees.

He was Northumbrian, he'd never known
horizons shimmering in the sun,
men with swart noontide faces sleeping, thick with flies,
by roadside cherry-trees.

He was Northumbrian, how should he know
mirage among blue hills,
thin streams that tinkle silence in the still
pulsating drone of summer—

How should he know
how cool the darkness in the whitewashed inns
after the white road dancing, and the stones,
and quick dry lizards, round Millevaches?

"*Fait chaud*", as each old woman said,
going over the hill, in Périgord,
prim in tight bonnets, worn black dresses, and content
with the lilt of sunlight in their bones.

MICHAEL ROBERTS

## *St. Gervais*

COMING out of the mountains of a summer evening,
travelling alone;
Coming out of the mountains
singing,

Coming among men, and limousines,
and elegant tall women, and hotels
with private decorative gardens,
Coming among dust,

After the distant cowbells, bringing
memory of muletracks, slithering snow,
wild pansies, and the sudden
loose clattering of rock,

I remembered Sunday evenings, churchbells and cinemas,
and clumsy trams
searching interminable streets
for quiet slums, the slums where I

remembering St. Gervais and the gorges, linger, bringing
in the worn shell of air, the pines,
the white-cloud-vision of Mont Blanc, and up
beyond les Contamines, the seven shrines.

MICHAEL ROBERTS

ERIC A. BLAIR

# *A Hanging*

IT was in Burma, a sodden morning of the rains. A sickly light, like yellow tinfoil, was slanting over the high walls into the jail yard. We were waiting outside the condemned cells, a row of sheds fronted with double bars, like small animal cages. Each cell measured about ten feet by ten and was quite bare within except for a plank bed and a pot for drinking water. In some of them brown silent men were squatting at the inner bars, with their blankets draped round them. These were the condemned men, due to be hanged within the next week or two.

One prisoner had been brought out of his cell. He was a Hindu, a puny wisp of a man, with a shaven head and vague liquid eyes. He had a thick, sprouting moustache, absurdly too big for his body, rather like the moustache of a comic man on the films. Six tall Indian warders were guarding him and getting him ready for the gallows. Two of them stood by with rifles and fixed bayonets, while the others handcuffed him, passed a chain through his handcuffs and fixed it to their belts, and lashed his arms tight to his sides. They crowded very close about him, with their hands always on him in a careful, caressing grip, as though all the while feeling him to make sure he was there. It was like men handling a fish which is still alive and may jump back into the water. But he stood quite unresisting, yielding his arms limply to the ropes, as though he hardly noticed what was happening.

Eight o'clock struck and a bugle call, desolately thin in the wet air, floated from the distant barracks. The superintendant of the jail, who was standing apart from the rest of us, moodily prodding the gravel with his stick, raised his head at the sound. He was an army doctor, with a grey toothbrush moustache and a gruff voice.

"For God's sake hurry up, Francis", he said irritably. "The man ought to have been dead by this time. Aren't you ready yet?"

Francis, the head jailer, a fat Dravidian in a white drill suit and gold spectacles, waved his black hand. "Yes sir, yes sir", he bubbled. "All iss satisfactorily prepared. The hangman iss waiting. We shall proceed."

"Well, quick march, then. The prisoners can't get their breakfast till this job's over."

We set out for the gallows. Two warders marched on either side of the prisoner, with their rifles at the slope; two others marched close against him, gripping him by arm and shoulder, as though at once pushing and supporting him. The rest of us, magistrates and the like, followed behind. Suddenly, when we had gone ten yards, the procession stopped short without any order or warning. A dreadful thing had happened—a dog, come goodness knows whence, had appeared in the yard. It came bounding among us with a loud volley of barks, and leapt round us wagging its whole body, wild with glee at finding so many human beings together. It was a large woolly dog, half Airedale, half pariah. For a moment it pranced round us, and then, before anyone could stop it, it had made a dash for the prisoner, and jumping up tried to lick his face. Everyone stood aghast, too taken aback even to grab at the dog.

"Who let that bloody brute in here?" said the superintendant angrily. "Catch it, someone!"

A warder, detached from the escort, charged clumsily after the dog, but it danced and gambolled just out of his reach, taking everything as part of the game. A young Eurasian jailer picked up a handful of gravel and tried to stone the dog away, but it dodged the stones and came after us again. Its yaps echoed from the jail walls. The prisoner, in the grasp of the two warders, looked on incuriously, as though this was another formality of the hanging. It was several minutes before someone managed to catch the dog. Then we put my handkerchief through its collar and moved off

once more, with the dog still straining and whimpering.

It was about forty yards to the gallows. I watched the bare brown back of the prisoner marching in front of me. He walked clumsily with his bound arms, but quite steadily, with that bobbing gait of the Indian who never straightens his knees. At each step his muscles slid neatly into place, the lock of hair on his scalp danced up and down, his feet printed themselves on the wet gravel. And once, in spite of the men who gripped him by each shoulder, he stepped slightly aside to avoid a puddle on the path.

It is curious, but till that moment I had never realised what it means to destroy a healthy, conscious man. When I saw the prisoner step aside to avoid the puddle, I saw the mystery, the unspeakable wrongness, of cutting a life short when it is in full tide. This man was not dying, he was alive just as we were alive. All the organs of his body were working—bowels digesting food, skin renewing itself, nails growing, tissues forming—all toiling away in solemn foolery. His nails would still be growing when he stood on the drop, when he was falling through the air with a tenth-of-a-second to live. His eyes saw the yellow gravel and the grey walls, and his brain still remembered, foresaw, reasoned —reasoned even about puddles. He and we were a party of men walking together, seeing, hearing, feeling, understanding the same world; and in two minutes, with a sudden snap, one of us would be gone—one mind less, one world less.

The gallows stood in a small yard, separate from the main grounds of the prison, and overgrown with tall prickly weeds. It was a brick erection like three sides of a shed, with planking on top, and above that two beams and a crossbar with the rope dangling. The hangman, a grey-haired convict in the white uniform of the prison, was waiting beside his machine. He greeted us with a servile crouch as we entered. At a word from Francis the two warders, gripping the prisoner more closely than ever, half led half pushed him to the gallows and helped him clumsily up the

ladder. Then the hangman climbed up and fixed the rope round the prisoner's neck.

We stood waiting, five yards away. The warders had formed in a rough circle round the gallows. And then, when the noose was fixed, the prisoner began crying out on his god. It was a high, reiterated cry of "Ram! Ram! Ram! Ram!" not urgent and fearful like a prayer or a cry for help, but steady, rhythmical, almost like the tolling of a bell. The dog answered the sound with a whine. The hangman, still standing on the gallows, produced a small cotton bag like a flour bag and drew it down over the prisoner's face. But the sound, muffled by the cloth, still persisted, over and over again: "Ram! Ram! Ram! Ram! Ram!"

The hangman climbed down and stood ready, holding the lever. Minutes seemed to pass. The steady, muffled crying from the prisoner went on and on, "Ram! Ram! Ram!" never faltering for an instant. The superintendant, his head on his chest, was slowly poking the ground with his stick; perhaps he was counting the cries, allowing the prisoner a fixed number—fifty, perhaps, or a hundred. Everyone had changed colour. The Indians had gone grey like bad coffee, and one or two of the bayonets were wavering. We looked at the lashed, hooded man on the drop, and listened to his cries—each cry another second of life; the same thought was in all our minds: oh, kill him quickly, get it over, stop that abominable noise!

Suddenly the superintendant made up his mind. Throwing up his head he made a swift motion with his stick. "Chalo!" he shouted almost fiercely.

There was a clanking noise, and then dead silence. The prisoner had vanished, and the rope was twisting on itself. I let go of the dog, and it galloped immediately to the back of the gallows; but when it got there it stopped short, barked, and then retreated into a corner of the yard, where it stood among the weeds, looking timorously out at us. We went round the gallows

to inspect the prisoner's body. He was dangling with his toes pointed straight downwards, very slowly revolving, as dead as a stone.

The superintendant reached out with his stick and poked the bare brown body; it oscillated slightly. "*He's* all right", said the superintendant. He backed out from under the gallows, and blew out a deep breath. The moody look had gone out of his face quite suddenly. He glanced at his wrist-watch. "Eight minutes past eight. Well, that's all for this morning, thank God."

The warders unfixed bayonets and marched away. The dog, sobered and conscious of having misbehaved itself, slipped after them. We walked out of the gallows yard, past the condemned cells with their waiting prisoners, into the big central yard of the prison. The convicts, under the command of warders armed with lathis, were already receiving their breakfast. They squatted in long rows, each man holding a tin pannikin, while two warders with buckets marched round ladling out rice; it seemed quite a homely, jolly scene, after the hanging. An enormous relief had come upon us now that the job was done. One felt an impulse to sing, to break into a run, to snigger. All at once everyone began chattering gaily.

The Eurasian boy walking beside me nodded towards the way we had come, with a knowing smile: "Do you know, sir, our friend (he meant the dead man), when he heard his appeal had been dismissed, he pissed on the floor of his cell. From fright.—Kindly take one of my cigarettes, sir. Do you not admire my new silver case, sir? From the boxwalah, two rupees eight annas. Classy European style."

Several people laughed—at what, nobody seemed certain.

Francis was walking by the superintendant, talking garrulously: "Well, sir, all hass passed off with the utmost satisfactoriness. It wass all finished—flick! like that. It iss not always so—oah, no! I have known cases where the doctor wass obliged to go beneath

the gallows and pull the prissoner's legs to ensure decease. Most disagreeable!"

"Wriggling about, eh? That's bad", said the superintendant.

"Ach, sir, it iss worse when they become refractory! One man, I recall, clung to the bars of hiss cage when we went to take him out. You will scarcely credit, sir, that it took six warders to dislodge him, three pulling at each leg. We reasoned with him. 'My dear fellow', we said, 'think of all the pain and trouble you are causing to us!' But no, he would not listen! Ach, he wass very troublesome!"

I found that I was laughing quite loudly. Everyone was laughing. Even the superintendant grinned in a tolerant way. "You'd better all come out and have a drink", he said quite genially. "I've got a bottle of whisky in the car. We could do with it."

We went through the big double gates of the prison, into the road. "Pulling at his legs!" exclaimed a Burmese magistrate suddenly, and burst into a loud chuckling. We all began laughing again. At that moment Francis' anecdote seemed extraordinarily funny. We all had a drink together, native and European alike, quite amicably. The dead man was a hundred yards away.

MALACHI WHITAKER

# "Dear Ailie"

ONE Spring morning at about half-past nine, a man walked up the steps of the General Post Office in London, pushed open the door with a movement of his arm, and met the warm, well-lit brightness inside by a slight lowering of his head.

Outside, the weather had taken a backward turn into winter. There was a low, grey sky, out of which slow, cold snowflakes were falling. These abandoned their purity to the black grease of pavement and roadway. Now and then, an angry gust of wind blew a few flakes into a corner, where they huddled together for a moment before they, too, melted away.

The man hesitated when he had entered. He did not know the place well. He had come here to write a letter, and it was over six months since he had last written a letter.

He came from a northern town; the sight of this place made him remember the post office in his own town. There were cubicles opposite the main counter, under the tall windows, quite private places at which you could stand up and write. Men were always making out telegrams to bookies, buoyed up by some secret belief in luck or form. You could see slips of paper on which were long lists of horses' names, with so much each way, or so much to win. People left torn letters lying there, or threw them on the floor, so that usually a man in a green baize apron was to be seen sweeping up these remnants, which dragged unwillingly and with a harsh sound behind his wide sweeping brush.

But here, there was a quiet superiority even in the delicately warmed air. There were three places where you could buy stamps instead of one. All the electric lights appeared to have little hats on. Everything was very clean, and there were not more than six customers in the great place at that time of the morning.

You could sit down to write, the man noticed, at little backless stools in front of the shining tables. There were neat inkstands, blotters, and pens. Without a glance round, he slipped into the first seat, pulled from his pocket a piece of notepaper doubled in two, opened it, and without putting any address or date, wrote the words "Dear Ailie". This done, he sat staring down at the paper, almost immobile. What could he write to Ailie?

He was young, not more than twenty-two. He had a pale face and large brown eyes. He was dressed in a ready-made brown suit and a worn brown overcoat with frayed pockets. He was of medium height and very thin; he wore his soft hat with the brim turned down all the way round, and the collar of his coat was almost up to his ears.

Some months ago, he had stolen seventy-two pounds. Because the cashier was away, his employer had given him the money in notes in an unsealed envelope and told him to take it to the bank, to put in his private account. With the money was a slip from the paying-in book. That was last autumn. He had burnt the slip in the station, had lit a cigarette with it, as a sort of gesture. He had never held so much money in his hand before.

He had not thought of Ailie once in the train. Now I've stolen money, he kept telling himself, I'm a thief, and I don't care. He was fond of reading detective novels, and thought he could easily keep out of the way of the police. Nobody troubled him at all, yet, as soon as he was settled down in the room he found for himself, Ailie began to haunt him.

She was his sweetheart, and for almost a year they had been meeting three or four times a week. She was just nineteen, was little and dark, and had hair that smelt nice. She let him talk about himself a great deal; she admired him and believed in him when he told her of all the things he meant to do in the future.

"I'm not going to be a clerk all my life", he assured her. "You'll see". There was always the idea of another country in his mind,

some part of Africa, the States, South America, China or Japan. And Ailie listened and told him how wonderful she thought he was; but in her own mind she had planned in just which street they would live when they were married.

They had taught each other to kiss, and at first, each had been vaguely disappointed in kisses. She used to read paper-backed novelettes in which kisses were pure and complete thrills, but in her own life, they were either not nice enough or too disturbing.

He had liked Ailie from the first. He liked her little resolute face and her calmness. He liked to watch her eyes, which were without shadows, and to see her lips lift in easy smiles. She did not talk much, and often all she would say was "Yes, Harry", or "No, Harry", yet he always wanted her approval

When his eager sentences had died away, and they had strolled through the fields to a small copse known as The Plantation, it was she who would find the most sheltered place of all. "We can talk better here, away from the path," she would say. And it was she who had first suggested putting his coat over instead of beneath them. "The grass is perfectly dry", she had said: and in a moment of daring," We can pretend we are in bed!" She had giggled breathlessly, and given him a hard, bright look at the same moment. His heart had beaten a little more quickly, but he put his arm clumsily round her shoulders. "It's funny how innocent girls are", he had thought. "You've got to protect them."

They talked often of getting married. It was always to be at some far distant date. Things weren't like they used to be. You had to have a bit of money to get married with now. "And I'm ambitious, Ailie. I want to show them—" by them, he meant Ailie's relations and friends, "that you're not marrying a dud. I want to go abroad, and make big money——"

She only listened and smiled.

It was getting pretty awful, having to part at night, now. But they were both so young, people couldn't seem to understand

that you might like to be together all the time at nineteen and twenty-one. His parents were both dead, and he lived in lodgings. But Ailie had brothers and sisters, and they thought she was only a baby. Often, when she was saying goodnight to Harry at the gate, somebody would call out: "When are you going to stop licking that boy's neck and come in?" He would say: "You'd better go, Ailie, good night". Nobody seemed to realise what they were feeling, at all.

That summer passed, and in September the darkness fell early. Ailie was restless, dissatisfied, discontented. As soon as they met, she would hurry along to the plantation. And she had begun to talk more. "The girls at work have been telling me all kinds of things", she said. "There's one of them—she's not much older than me—and she says she does just whatever she wants to do. She's told me——" and Ailie began to whisper to the boy under the shadow of the trees.

The sun had just set, but a dull red glow filled half the sky. A mist moved slowly up the hill from the river. As the glow in the sky faded, the mist, thin and grey, crept about them. The birds were all home and silent. Now and again a leaf fell noiselessly. As the stars came out, the two under the trees were still whispering.

"You simply don't know what you're talking about, Ailie", the boy kept saying. "You oughtn't to listen to that girl."

"Oh, shut up", she answered him. "I'll just never say another word. And you can go abroad; you can go to-morrow. I wish I'd never said anything to you; you'll despise me now."

"No I don't, Ailie, I never will. But some day before long, we'll get married, and then we'll always be together, and there'll never be any more rotten partings."

She was quiet for a long time, then she turned to him again and began to whisper, very low.

The boy went home shaken with terror.

"Don't worry. Everything will be all right". The girl seemed to be amused, self possessed, and by now the older of the two.

"Everything may not be all right", returned the boy violently, "I'm sorry to say I didn't carry out your friend's instructions. She's a liar, anyway", he finished bitterly.

"*What?*" asked the girl. "Oh, Harry", she wailed. "Whatever have you done? It's all your fault. I told you."

"Oh, for God's sake shut up, Ailie", he cried. He wanted to be alone. All the bright dreams he had built up so carefully seemed to have tumbled about his head.

They parted at her gate with a cold kiss. Neither of them slept that night, and the following day the boy stole the seventy-two pounds and ran away to London. And here he sat in the Post Office, wanting to say many things to Ailie.

He was not to know that his employer had forgotten to fill in the duplicate of the pay-in slip, had forgotten to give him the book, had forgotten everything within a few moments, because he had had a stroke, from which he never recovered. The old man was not of sufficient importance to be "news". The notes had been altogether passed over, the boy had scarcely been missed; his careful hiding need never have been done.

By now his money was almost finished. He had been too much afraid to apply for any of the romantic, adventurous jobs which he had once fancied so much. He spent most of his time lurking near the docks, moving off quickly whenever he saw a policeman. He could not understand why he had ever stolen the money. "Anybody might have pinched it on impulse, and gone back, and owned up; but I can't be anything but a rotter", he told himself. "There's nothing left to do but drown myself, now. I can't go back after I've spent it."

The Post Office became busier, but still the boy sat there with the dried pen in his hand. One or two people came behind him, looking hurried or angry, but after reading the words "Dear

Ailie", walked away to find a place where somebody was ending a letter, not just beginning one.

He wanted to tell Ailie all about stealing the money and running away. He wanted to tell her about the way he loved her, and was in agony for fear he had harmed her. "I must go back. I must do something different. I can't go tramping about these miserable streets or sitting in that miserable room any longer. I am a man. I've been a fool in every way. Surely there's some way I can be punished. I must do something to start all over again. I want to be good. I want Ailie. We didn't know anything. I won't be finished and done for. I won't go slinking into the river out of the way. What's she doing? She's my girl, and I've got to go to see her. Nothing's stopping me but myself."

He sat upright, turned down his collar and rebuttoned the coat which at some time during the morning he had unfastened. From his left-hand pocket he took out a stamped envelope and addressed it. Looking once more at the words "Dear Ailie", in a puzzled way, he put the paper inside the envelope and licked down the flap. Then he took his strange letter and posted it in the box marked Country. As he repassed the table where he had sat so long, he noticed that a fat, middle-aged woman was writing a postcard with the pen that he had held.

When he got outside, it was still snowing, yet he did not turn up his collar or in any way hide his face.

# THE ADELPHI FORUM

## *Killing the Nerve*

I HAVE been unable to extract much sustenance from Mr. Hyde's essay in the July *Adelphi.* He objects, I should say quite reasonably, to Mr. Edwards' review of *The Prospects of Humanism*; but instead of fighting the matter out with his particular antagonist, he broadens the scope of his argument to include me, and "neo-romanticism" (also me), and the whole *Adelphi* magazine (me again). Now, whether or not "neo-romanticism" is me, and the *Adelphi* is me, Mr. G. B. Edwards is certainly not me. For one thing, Mr. Edwards has a beard, and I have not; for another, we have our own quite different ways of feeling and thinking. That, I should have thought was plainly apparent from Mr Edwards' criticism of me contained in his review of Mr. Hyde's book.

Now, Mr. Hyde must make up his mind. Does he want to fight Mr. Edwards, or does he want to fight me? I daresay Mr. Edwards is ready, and I am sure I am; but on condition we fight, and are fought, as separate individuals. I refuse to appear in the ring as any part of a mythical Murry-Edwards-*Adelphi*-Neo-romantic creature.

This mythical creature is ubiquitous in the pages of Mr. Hyde's essay. His presence makes the essay nugatory, so far as I am concerned, in all but the few specific references to definite statements of my own. These are to be found in Mr. Hyde's § 3 (p. 279).

> Once assume that it is by pure contemplation alone that the Real can be experienced, once assume that to the purified vision every object becomes equally "significant"—and the nerve of morality is cut at the root. It loses all claim to transcendental sanction and becomes a matter of personal prejudice and inclination. Why be good when badness is just as lovely to the contemplative eye?

This passage I can recognise as partly based on some remarks of

mine. I have argued, more than once in these pages, that "morality" has no transcendental sanction. Mr. Hyde makes no reply, save "Why, then, be good?" But that is ejaculation, not argument. And, to use Mr. Hyde's impressive phraseology, "I am reluctantly bound to confess" that I am surprised that so conscious an intellectualist as he should not be aware of the difference between these two different things.

Because morality is devoid of all transcendental sanction, it does not cease to be important. But that is not enough for Mr. Hyde, who, from my angle of diagnosis, exhibits all the symptoms of the scared moralist. For him, morality must be either transcendental, or illusory. "Why be good?" The answer is simply "Why not?"—or "Don't, if you don't want to be". Personally, I like good people, when they are naturally good, when their generosity or devotion springs out of their bowels of compassion. I intensely dislike people who are good because they think they ought to be good. I think they would be much better if they gave up the effort to be good. In them it is against nature. If they abandoned it, once for all, they would very likely develop all kinds of spontaneous and attractive goodnesses to which their fellows would prove responsive.

But in saying and believing all this, I am, according to Mr. Hyde, committing a heinous offence. I am leaving "the two halves of my philosophy completely uncorrelated". This is untrue. As a matter of fact, it is Mr. Hyde's philosophy which falls into two uncorrelated halves, not mine. It is true I do my best, and exhort others to do their best, to make "significant variations" of themselves. But in so doing, I am perfectly consistent. I do not believe that it depends upon me, upon my personal ego, whether I am a "significant variation" or not. What I mean by "doing my best" in this regard is simply to make myself responsive to all kinds of stimulus. I regard myself as completely without responsibility for my virtues or my vices. That I am not a conspicuous monster of

villainy is, no doubt, disappointing to Mr. Hyde, who seems to feel that I ought to be one. But that is simply because he does not understand my philosophy, which is so much more single and simple than so resolute a moralist can conceive. The beauty of my philosophy is that if Mr. Hyde understood it, he could not fail to embrace it, for he would see instantly that there is nothing to embrace.

So I am afraid that I can do nothing to remove Mr. Hyde's "obstinate feeling that I am abandoning the problem just at the point where the real work begins, and where, what is more, it first becomes vital from the human point of view". Much as I should like to remove the nerve of Mr. Hyde's morality, which is so troublesome to him and gives him such obvious toothache, I cannot do it. He must perform that operation himself, if he wants it performed. Fortunately for him, I do not think he does want it. He wants the pain of trying to be good. He wants to go on worrying. I don't. The demands of life upon us are exigent enough, in all conscience, without our spending any of our energies in making the tension tighter. My philosophy, which is, of course, not mine, though Mr. Hyde seems to believe I invented it, has the practical effect of slackening the wasteful tension under which the moralist lives.

But once again I must protest, very distinctly, against Mr. Hyde's implication that my position is " æsthetic". He says:—

> "Mr. Murry's religion remains satisfying to those who, like its sponsor, have reached this region of experience along the pathway of art. Such thinkers, alive as they are to many aspects of the problem which escape the narrowly orthodox, yet have no really valid standards with which to measure manifestations of the spirit. If I may be forgiven for saying so, they are too inexperienced."

No, I do not think Mr. Hyde can be forgiven for saying so. The assumption of superior spiritual experience really is rather preposterous; and the insinuation that I reached my position "along

the pathway of art" while Mr. Hyde reached his in a laborious pilgrimage along the high-road of life, more than faintly condescending. If I may be forgiven for saying so, Mr. Hyde is too self-satisfied.

I know nothing whatever about this "pathway of art". It is perfectly true that I have sought eagerly, and not in vain, among those who had the gift of utterance for corroboration of my own experience of life, and for help in interpreting that experience to myself, and to others. Since the artist is, by definition, the human being who can utter and communicate his experience, this recourse of mine was natural and inevitable. But to represent this effort of mine as a loitering among some imaginary by-ways of "art", sequestered from the painful and dusty high-road of real experience, is a travesty to which I am in duty bound to object. It is a facile misrepresentation which may easily gain credence among superficial minds.

That Mr. Hyde should persist in it—for I must remind him that I have publicly objected to it before now—is to me additional evidence of how singularly he fails to understand the substance of my position. We are, indeed, fearfully remote from one another. On everything that is accidental and relative in my statement, the idiomatic element is inseparable from any attempt to give expression to a truth of experience, he seizes avidly. The husk remains in his hand, the kernel slips through his fingers.

I am sorry that I should be thus elusive. It is surely not for want of trying to make myself plain. But my unfortunate elusiveness, it seems to me, is not of a kind that should expose me to downright misrepresentation. Says Mr. Hyde:—

> " The religion of the *Adelphi* seems for all practical purposes to be that of Mr. Murry. It is distinguished by several very revolutionary features: the notion of a personal God is abandoned, morality is deprived of its transcendental sanction, the element of the supernatural is completely repudiated. But when the more orthodox student of

> the subject complains that these conceptions raise for us very grave difficulties, and have as a result been rejected by some of the deepest religious thinkers in the past, Mr. Murry blandly assures him that this is because these people did not undergo the mystical experience of death and rebirth in a sufficiently profound sense."

Now when and where have I blandly given such an assurance? And will Mr. Hyde further tell me definitely the names of those deep religious thinkers of the past who have considered the revolutionary features of "my" religion and, on due consideration, rejected them because of the grave difficulties which they entail? I should like to study their conclusions. And, further, will Mr. Hyde tell us whether he himself subscribes to the opinions of these authorities? I ask this because I am rather tired of critics who belabour me with vague "authorities" in whom they do not themselves believe, and because I have gathered from Mr. Hyde's own book that he himself is not an orthodox Christian; and from my past experience of similar controversies, I cannot help wondering whether Mr. Hyde is willing to avail himself of the help of orthodoxy in assailing me, but is quite unwilling to be bound by orthodoxy where his own personal beliefs are involved.

J. M. M.

## *Edward Carpenter*

"HE was neither a strong nor a wary thinker", says Mr. E. M. Forster in the charming and very illuminating sketch of Edward Carpenter in his old age, which he contributes to this book (*Edward Carpenter. In Appreciation. Twenty-nine essays, edited by Gilbert Beith. Allen & Unwin, 7s. 6d.*). This judgment may well be true, but it becomes clear after reading the various tributes that Carpenter, at his best, exemplified a way of life whose value is beyond the jurisdiction of even the strongest and wariest

'thinking'. Rare and precious indeed are the men of whom it can be said, as Mr. Forster says of Carpenter, that in personal contact they give "the gift of gifts, life itself, the transference of vitality, the sense of peacefulness and power."

The Victorians, both the truly great and the merely eminent, have received from the present generation their full share of admiration as well as ridicule; but the group with which it is more natural to associate Edward Carpenter, and of whom Bernard Shaw, Havelock Ellis, the Webbs and Mrs. Besant are the most famous survivors, is at present rather neglected. Perhaps they are still too close to us to excite either the romantic admiration or the remorseless antipathy which are so commonly felt for the dominant figures of the immediately preceding age. I would describe them as a group, and I would describe that group as 'Edwardian', because, although their careers were utterly divergent and although much of their finest work was done in the nineteenth century, most of them attained their widest influence in the Edwardian period and even the most dissimilar among them—Havelock Ellis, say, and Mrs. Besant—have in common a modernity of outlook that makes them somehow fit in with the world of to-day, however antagonistic to its spirit, in a way that no true Victorian could be conceived to do. Thomas Hardy, for example, with all his breadth of sympathy, never seemed at home in the twentieth century, and it is more natural to think of him as a Victorian than an Edwardian.

It would be extravagant to suggest that Edward Carpenter was a great artist like Hardy, a great propagandist like Shaw, or a great public worker like Mrs. Besant or the Webbs, but I believe that he has had a more direct and intimate influence than any of them upon, at any rate, an important minority of the contemporary young and middle-aged. His Socialism was of a kind that age cannot wither. Whatever economic, political or social changes may occur, there will always be men who are better fitted for

hard manual labour and others who are better fitted for hard mental labour, and that these should respect and understand one another, should be ashamed to exploit one another and positively unhappy to possess special advantages and privileges other than those necessary for their function, will always be essential if human society is to become worthy of the best in human nature. Carpenter came from the well-to-do class and was exceptionally cultured and well-educated; and although he worked on the land, and made sandals, his most important activity was, of course, in the sphere of the intellect; but his sympathy and love for the people who labour with their hands was not theoretical or romantic-exotic, it was the mainspring of his life.

> "It is not a little thing", he wrote, "you—wherever you are—following the plough, or clinging with your feet to the wet rigging, or nursing your babe through the long day when your husband is absent, or preparing supper for his return—or you on the footplate of your engine. . . It is not a little thing that by such a life your face should become a lantern of strength to men;
>
> "That wherever you go they should rise up stronger to the battle, and go forth with good courage.
>
> "Nay, it is very great.
>
> "I do not forget.
>
> "Indeed, I worship none more than I worship you, and such as you
>
> "Who are no god sitting upon a jasper throne,
>
> "But the same toiling in disguise among the children of men and living your own life among them."

Carpenter lived with working people and his most important and life-long friendships were with them; but he was so sane and well-balanced that his "desertion" of his own class for another does not seem at any time in his life to have cut him off from any class of society. There was no suggestion of crude rebellion or revenge in his forsaking the ways of his family, and he seems to have remained always on good terms with them. During

the greater part of his life his homosexuality must have been more or less an open secret, and in 1895, the year Oscar Wilde was arrested, he published, privately, a book on the Intermediate Sex, yet his own private life escaped, except for one interruption at a Suffrage meeting, as unscathed by sordid malice as is possible for one engaged in an active, revolutionary, semi-public career. That this should have been so is really an extraordinary tribute to the superiority of his character, for, although always reasonable and moderate, he was uncompromisingly and fearlessly identified all through his life with unpopular causes of the sort which usually stir up the foulest and most evil of herd passions.

In spite of his many activities, his vigorous pioneering and lecturing and writing, he was the very reverse of that well-intentioned but shallow and nagging type of reformer who is a special product of Western civilisation. He had a firm hold of the truth that being is more important than doing. In his autobiographical book, *My Days and Dreams*, when he is describing "how the world looks at seventy", he quotes with approval the saying of Lao-Tse: "To teach without words and to be useful without action, few among men are capable of this."

His books, though stimulating, if you sympathise with his argument, and wise, if you understand his wisdom, are nevertheless rather insipid and colourless in comparison with the best books in the same class. He is one of those whose life is greater than their books.

> "Sex-pleasures", he wrote in *Love's Coming of Age*, "afford a kind of type of all pleasure. The dissatisfaction which at times follows on them is the same as follows on all pleasure which is *sought*, and which does not come unsought. The dissatisfaction is not in the nature of pleasure itself but in the nature of *seeking*. In going off in pursuit of things external, the 'I' (since it really has everything and needs nothing) deceives itself, goes out from its true home, tears itself asunder. . . Pleasure should come as the natural (and indeed inevitable) accompaniment of life, believed in with a kind of

free faith but never sought as the object of life. It is in the inversion of this order that the uncleanness of the senses arises. Sex to-day throughout the domain of civilisation is thoroughly unclean. Everywhere it is slimed over with the thought of pleasure."

And in *Towards Democracy:*

"Now understand me well:

"There is no desire or indulgence that is forbidden; there is not one good and another evil—all are alike in that respect;

"In place all are to be used.

"Yet in using be not entangled in them; for then already they are bad, and will cause thee suffering. . . So while thy body of desire is (and must be by the law of its nature) incessantly in motion in the world of suffering, the 'I' high up above is fixed in heaven. . . .

"And him thou lovest or her thou lovest—

"If without confusion thou beholdest such one fixed like a star in heaven, and ever in thy most clinging burning passion rememberest Whom thou lovest,

"Then art thou blessed beyond words, and thy love is surely eternal;

"But if by confusion thou knowest not whom thou lovest—but seest only the receptacle of desire which inhabits the world of change and suffering—

"Then shalt thou be whirled and gulfed in a sea of torment, and shalt travel far and be many times lost upon that ocean before thou shalt know what is the true end of thy voyage."

Either these passages will be meaningless to the reader or he will recognise that they contain the truth which every soul must learn or tear itself in pieces. But the greatest writers do not labour to express the truth as Carpenter is doing here. Rather, their words *become*, in the utterance, the truth itself.

As a writer, Edward Carpenter seldom, if ever, conveys the gift of life itself; as a man, it is easy to believe, as those who knew him assert, that he had the power. His sense of values saved him in turn from the philistine complacency of the well-to-do, from academic culture-snobbery, from the extravagance of sensual

nature-worship, from the dreary impertinence of 'good works', and finally from being stultified by 'fame'. The sanity and steadfastness with which he devoted his whole life to a vision of the sublimity of mankind makes any other way of life seem not only feeble but insane.

RICHARD REES

# *Man and the Emergent Pattern*

THERE seems nothing in the new horizons opened by advanced mathematicians and physicists which has not been tacitly implied by religions for centuries, only to-day those dreams have been adapted to civilisation's wider experience and given a semblance of rationalism. To say the age of reason is passed and the age of intuition arrived means, alas, nothing. Unfortunately, man has always had to guess first and try to explain afterwards —even in science one works to an hypothesis—there is nothing new or vital in all this.

If the guessers are developing a belief in the efficacy of guesses, it is by their reasoning they are so doing. A circle.

Not that prophets, scientific or literary or religious, have no worthy message. On the contrary, their message may be an expression of a direct flame from the iris of the cosmos, but it has nothing but a minuscular importance in relation to the universal out-thrust of life itself. Literature or science cannot by binding its loose leaves produce a guide to existence.

To-day, science has struck the dominant note because mass consciousness at this moment is ripe for the assimilation of this, the next step on. Wearied of outworn beliefs and hopes, the mass springs to accept what promises a new vital explanation of its own consciousness of unity with the cosmos. It loves to think that it may transcend space and time; that immortality, the ever

uncertain prize of its present misery, is now within reach—almost. It is a nice popular announcement; better than Darwin's apes.

But scientific method is no more than a splitting, measuring and adapting of what has been already produced. Science follows on the trail of creation and cannot by its very nature ever reach ahead of the process it is analysing, notwithstanding any appearance it may have of transcending human limits. When it has learnt all about to-day, to-morrow is already at noon. If man develops an immortal mind, be assured it has been born of a material transcending immortality.

It is curious to note how great physicists and mathematicians, faced with the problems of non sequitur in their vivisection of matter, recoil on the supposition that the universe must be composed of "mind-stuff" or pure mathematics. Is it not the inevitable reduction to that last (and foremost) out-thrust of organic development? They can go no further than human consciousness because, as yet, there is no further to go.

Psychologists have delved in their tenebrous realm to find something ultimate. It will no doubt be another recoil on to the last out-thrust of germ plasm. Worth remarking is the fact that the psychologist is driven to forsake Psyche for things purely corporeal, while physicists and mathematicians are led upwards into the unsubstantial strata of Psyche. Confusion. The goldfish swim round and round.

Freud's genius for analysis has reduced most human aspirations to the interaction of sex impulses. In other words, to cell cleavage and multiplication. This, too, might so easily have been foretold by a more-than-human intelligence, since if there is anything inseparable from living matter it is the reproductive or growth quality, and the sublime psyche in man is housed in a tower of primeval mud. But that does not lead us anywhere save in a circle.

This is not intended simply as destructive criticism of the aims

and aspirations of the best intellects civilisation has produced, but rather as a plea for great tolerance.

For example, because a writer has a fine mind, is sincere in a new and possibly startling concept of what man might be, the fact of his work being banned by cheap authority might be accepted as the curb of the cosmic design, not railed at as the mob's failure to see a prophet.

When one derides the apparent stupidity of mob passions or declaims against the actions of malevolent authority, one might realise that, however the individual suffers, these apparent stupidities may be the twist of the pattern and more conducive to the eventual persistence of the race than the dictates of any individual consciousness.

W. S. GALL

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

# *Interruption by Stalin*

RED BREAD. *By Maurice Hindus* (Cape) 12*s.* 6*d.*
MOSCOW HAS A PLAN. *By M. Ilin* (Cape) 5*s.*

MR. MAURICE HINDUS is an invaluable observer of contemporary Russia. Born in a Russian village, of peasant parents, he migrated to America with the family some twenty-five years ago, at about the age of ten—old enough to remember and be remembered by his native place. Now a full-fledged American citizen, with a capacity for independent thinking, and at least a competent literary style, with sufficient acquired detachment and sufficient instinctive sympathy, he has for the second time made it his business to give a faithful description of what is happening in Russia. "Red Bread" is a melodramatic title for a book that is merely, and truly dramatic. In it Mr. Hindus describes the impact of the new Russian system of collective farms (*kolhoz*, appropriately rendered "colfarm" in *Moscow has a Plan*) on the Russian peasant. Needless to say, the impact upon the most progressive and hard-working of the individualistic peasants is painful to an extreme. The immediate price of this collectivisation is that the most industrious and capable peasants are ruthlessly penalised for their virtues. Abstractly, the situation is described in M. Ilin's "Soviet primer", which expounds with the force of sheer conviction the scope of the Five Year Plan. It is evidently addressed to children, and it is magnificently conceived for its purpose. A Boy Scout or a Girl Guide would go mad over it. Here is the manner in which the situation, which Mr. Hindus depicts in human terms, is presented to Russian "Children's Brigades":

> A socialistic state must be built.
>
> In the village this is by no means an easy task. It is less difficult to build socialism in the cities because there the State owns all machines and all factories. The State can conduct the work in the interests of the whole society, of the entire country. In the village there are many owners. Each peasant owns his tools, his horse, his cow. Each peasant works in his own way and works badly, because he must work on his miniature farm, in his little hand shop. The country

consequently suffers from a scarcity of foodstuffs and raw products for its factories.

But this is not all. In the cities the workers have broken the power of manufacturers; they have driven out the great landowners; factories and mills now belong to the state. In the village we still have private property, we still have individual ownership. And the capitalists of the village, the *Kulaks*, the peasants who have made money, are of course opposed to all forms of collectivism. They pull backwards and try to hamper the peasants who desire to unite and build up a socialised farm. This is the chief obstacle in the way to socialism.

In the socialistic state there will be no classes. The Revolution first removed the manufacturers and landowners. Now we are setting ourselves the task of disarming another class—the *Kulaks*, the capitalists of the village.

Having got so far, I read, in *The Times* of July 6, the summary of Stalin's speech delivered at a conference of Soviet economists on June 23. It is a pronouncement of great importance: first, because it deals with the practical effects of communism precisely upon those—the factory-workers—among whom complete collectivism has prevailed for a longish period, and second, because it openly abandons the principle: "From each according to his capacity, to each according to his needs". Differential wages are proclaimed to be a necessity. "A system of payment according to the worker's need could not be followed (said Stalin), and workers must be paid strictly according to the amount and the quality of the work they performed". As a corollary, he emphasised the necessity of one-man control in the factories; and of placing under the control of the single director the decision to which grade of food- and money-payment the worker is entitled.

These changes are radical; for, obviously, the moment that communism takes this form it falls into line with what seems to be the inevitable development of Western industrialism. When the ideal aim of communism—"To each according to his needs, from each according to his capacity"—is abandoned, the most revolutionary element it contains is abandoned also. The revolution becomes simply technical. No-one, except the pure capitalist and rentier, who is a relatively rare bird, even in a highly-industrialised society, could have any solid objection to living and working in a society in which the principle of reward according to desert is maintained. In such a society the abuses

of capitalism are removed, the advantages of individualism retained.

Stalin's "surrender"—if it is a surrender at all, and it is to be noted that he claims merely to be overcoming the opposition "of those who pretend to interpret Socialism better than Marx or Lenin"—may be regarded simply as a surrender of the impossible for the possible: Communism becomes simply a technical organisation of society, different from and possibly superior to the American or our own. It ceases to be a different kind of spiritual organisation. It is perhaps, and probably, a more efficient, and therefore, to that extent, a more comely organisation; probably, also one that will eventually increase the total of free energy within a nation—an America, let us suppose, with its millionaires removed, but its big business men retained. These will have nearly all the power they have at present, and a modest sufficiency of dollars, enough to differentiate them from the less expert. It is all that the average human being, freed from the nightmare fear of going under, or of his children going under, in a competitive and acquisitive society, would probably demand. The maximum possible elimination of the competitive and acquisitive elements in a society composed of average human beings may thus be achieved in Russia. It is certainly well worth achieving in a world wherein man, if he does not live by bread alone, cannot live without it.

This revolution within a revolution has its pathetic side; for, to judge by Mr. Hindus's account of the village resistance to the "colfarm", it is highly probable that if communism had been presented to him in this form, the opposition of the *Kulak* to collectivisation would have been negligible. If the capable and industrious peasant had been assured that his superior ability and industry was to be duly rewarded in the *Kolhoz*, one of his chief and most natural fears would have been overcome; and much of the pure tragedy of his "liquidation" would have been spared. Not that Stalin's speech says anything of extending the new system to agriculture. But it seems impossible that it should not be thus extended, for it is difficult to suppose that the new system is merely a temporary inducement to the factory-worker to facilitate the Five Year Plan. That would indeed be playing with fire. Such a change of method could hardly be revoked without a catastrophe. The mere fact that it has been found necessary, after fourteen years, argues it irrevocable. And if it is irrevocable, then a very solid bridge is about to be built between Russian communism and the industrial societies beyond.

The Russian organisation ceases to be of a different kind, making different, and hitherto unheard-of, demands upon human nature, from Western industrialism. It gains immensely in practicability; and it loses a good deal of its originality. It becomes simply a stage of economic organisation at which we must arrive; and the sooner we arrive at it the better. I should incline to believe, moreover, that the new system would be favoured by the business man of imagination, and resisted to the uttermost by the Trades Unionists who form the bulk of the Labour Party. Mr. Henry Ford, on the other hand, might make his home in Russia to-morrow.

Not that the Russian experiment becomes less important by this revolution in the revolution. The mechanics of existence are terribly important; and how infinitely better to have a good machine than a bad one! But we must look to the end; and the end may be simply that the sheer volume of fundamental discontent will be hugely multiplied. Energies will be freed, but how will they be employed? When the bread and the circuses are secured to everybody, as they ought to be secured, what then? Shall we wake up and realise that industrialism is a vast mistake; that it had been better if the machine had never been born; that man can flourish only when he has no leisure? Will the energies of the future state be largely expended in dragooning reluctant workers into uncongenial occupations, or will all the dirty work be done by a relatively small band of completely disinterested heroes? One might heap question upon question: all unanswerable, but worth dreaming about, if only to remind us that when this proximate millennium has been reached, the fun will only be beginning; and incidentally that if the next number of *The Adelphi* were to be postponed till September, 2031, there would be no essential breach in continuity. Most of the old familiar problems with which it largely deals would still be staring us in the face.

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To sum up in personal terms, Stalin, by his speech, has turned a possible swan into an unmistakable goose: a good goose, a necessary goose, a goose that lays golden eggs—but still not a swan. I had promised myself a salutary exercise in self-annihilation; what I fear I have received is a kind invitation via Moscow to join Sir Oswald Mosley's New Party. Why not? Why not indeed? But seeing that I had promised him

my vote anyway, and long before, it seems that, in the intervals between general elections, I must return to cultivate my garden.

## *Nine Books of Verse*

VALE AND OTHER POEMS. *By A. E.* (Macmillan) 3*s.* 6*d.*
THE CICADAS AND OTHER POEMS. *By Aldous Huxley* (Chatto & Windus) 5*s.*
THE COLLECTED SATIRES AND POEMS OF OSBERT SITWELL. (Duckworth) 8*s.* 6*d.*
POEMS: 1926–1930. *By Robert Graves* (Heinemann) 3*s.* 6*d.*
OLD PASTURES. *By Padraic Colum* (Macmillan) 6*s.*
OPUS 7. *By Sylvia Townsend Warner* (Chatto & Windus) 2*s.*
CONFLICT. *By William Soutar* (Chapman & Hall) 4*s.* 6*d.*
POEMS. *By Romilly John* (Heinemann) 5*s.*
TWENTY-EIGHT POEMS. *By A. A. Le M. Simpson* (Douglas) 3*s.* 6*d.*

FOR every reviewer of poetry there must be moods when all that is printed as verse is but a weariness to the spirit, a diseased growth of words into which rhythms, rhymes and similar verbal tricks have to be injected like a drug in an attempt to conceal the absence of real inspiration. Nothing can be more deadly, tasted in bulk, than verse which just doesn't succeed in being poetry. Yet it is not for the present writer to complain. A few books he has set aside as impossible of critical comment, but of the nine that remain it may be said that six at least are the work of writers genuinely and frequently, if not invariably, poets. Among them all A. E., not merely by virtue of seniority, must have first place. His appeal, to the bright modern whose prophets are Sitwells and Huxleys, may not be immediate, but to any who can and will accept his mood, it will be profound and permanent. This submission to "the Vedic seers", this concern with the flesh only as the clay envelope of the kaleidoscopic rainbow spirit, may suggest a blunting of that sharp immediacy of secular experience found, especially, in some of Mr. Huxley's work, but none can deny, when the surface is penetrated, the presence of a deeper and more enduring beauty, a beauty of that intelligence which is the soul, flowering in the grave and lovely poetry of a man who has pondered deeply upon life in quest for an enduring reality, and who in his quest has passed beyond revolt to understanding of the mystery of pain as the condition of joy:

They stilled the sweetest breath of song
Who loosed from love its chains,
Who made it easy to be borne,
A thing that had no pains.

A dusk has blighted Psyche's wings
And the wild beauty dies.
The fragrance and the glow were born
From its own agonies.

To that he returns, and in yet lovelier lines. He attempts many moods, and all, it may be said as a general statement, successfully. Such a slim volume as this, if only for *Blight*, *How?*, *Dark Rapture*, *Dark Weeping*, *Sybil*, *Atlantic*, *Monist*, and the most beautiful *Germinal*, is an absolute addition to English poetry.

Can the same be said for Mr. Huxley's book? He has many gifts, not least the ability to give to language a proud pomp, a power, rare in our day. Life, so far, has always seemed to him just a little too much a "theatre of varieties" in which he played the part of "the terrible infant" in the stalls. In the title-poem he acclaims, as one who lacks it, sheer vitality however senseless, and in *Arabia Infelix* negatively regrets, in the barren land's dead peace, "those agonies that made it live". But there are signs of a positive revolt, an awakening:

The choice is always ours. Then, let me choose
The longest art, the hard Promethean way,
Cherishingly to tend and feed and fan
That inward fire, whose small precarious flame,
Kindled or quenched, creates
The noble or the ignoble men we are,
The worlds we live in and the very fates,
Our bright or muddy star.

If Mr. Huxley would but make that choice, and hold to it unremittingly, who can say what he might not achieve? As it is, he exhibits in these pages an individual, striking, and sustained accomplishment few living writers could excel.

Mr. Sitwell is another very clever writer too much of whose work is remote from poetry. He is witty, and in his first entertaining section

the salt of satire biteth to the bone, but, more markedly in his poetry proper, he is too effusive both of ideas and words. He gives fancy its rein until imagination, less hardy nag, droops far in the rear, disdained by so cavorting an exuberance; he is in fact like his Mr. Goodbeare, who was constantly being put in mind of things: "Anything would suggest anything to him, in the manner of modern poetry". He is a most accomplished writer, he knows what poetry is (for he defines it excellently on page 197), yet even the *England Reclaimed* eclogues are too persistently the work of a clever man a little, just a little, too self-consciously clever. One recalls his poems rather for individual lines or brief passages than as organic and cumulative unities. Yet there is real poetry here, as, to name a few examples coming instantly to mind, *Night*, *The Beginning*, *The End*, *Out of the Flame*, and the *Dedication to Edith*.

Mr. Graves too is very self-consciously clever, and knowing. He mistrusts the world, and thought itself; and it is more as a precaution than a conviction that he taps the side of his nose and declares that no one will ever take *him* in.

> Take your delight in momentariness,
> Walk between dark and dark, a shining space
> With the grave's narrowness, though not its peace.

That, the last three lines of one of the most attractive, though briefest, poems in the book, seems the key to much of his writing, and also to its failure to engage more than momentarily. He has power of expression, real intensity, but fritters it away in nursery rhymes (modernised) or word-pattern trifles that often have the interest rather of cross-word puzzles than poetry. Not, however, always.

In Mr. Padraic Colum, A. E. finds a worthy compatriot; he too is a poet, if lesser in scope and ultimate quality. His words, his rhythms, seem at a first, and even second or third, reading as hard as rock, and almost as difficult to penetrate, not with the mind but the senses. But one realises, even when one cannot immediately grasp, the organic nature, the integrity, of his work, and the elegaic *A Man Bereaved*, *Breffne Caoine*, and *In Memory of J. B. Yeats* present no difficulty at all.

Miss Sylvia Townsend Warner in her *Opus 7* has put a typical short story into verse which sometimes by the inspiration less of its general theme than its immediate subject rises to something very like poetry.

The actual tale of Rebecca Random of Love Green, who sold flowers to soak herself in gin, and who finally, as usual drunk, came to a sad end in the churchyard, is not important or especially credible, but it is certainly readable enough, and occasionally in brief passages (but too long to quote) a good deal more.

Messrs. William Soutar, Romilly John, and A. A. Le M. Simpson are apparently appearing in book-form for the first time. All utilise more or less traditional forms, and though the two last are in varying ways experimentalist at times they show to best advantage at their simplest. Mr. John in particular is a conventional lyrist of mortality that "comes as a breath and passing away", but he is always, at the least, extremely accomplished, verbally dexterous, and genuinely imaginative. Mr. Simpson exhibits real vitality of language, but some of the best poems, as *Nightingales* and *Out of the Storm*, are over ingenious in their resort to association. *Jacob* is finely written, and half a dozen shorter lyrics make the collection worth while. Of the three Mr. Soutar is the most striking, finally if not immediately. His work is uneven, and blemished by remediable defects of phrasing, but such verses as *For One who Desired a Song*, *Frustration*, *Confession*, *The Ghost* (quoted below), and, in a more ambitious strain, *The Thoughts of God*, leave no doubt at all about his gift.

Our love was dead; and thou had'st gone
Into a distant land:
Upon our love there stood a stone
Engrav'd by mine own hand:
I turn'd me to the life of men
Nor thought to touch thy form again.

I have not seen a dead man rise;
And I shall never see
My dead youth laughing from those eyes
That lift their pools to me:
Only the ghost of love appears
And walks above the buried years.

This book deserves attention, this poet encouragement.

GEOFFREY WEST

## *"Beachcomber" versus Bloomsbury*

BY THE WAY. *By "Beachcomber"* (Sheed & Ward) *7s. 6d.*

THE publication in book form of the ephemeral triflings of a writer who prefers to conceal his identity, has drawn attention once more to a most regrettable state of affairs. The cheap gibes and vulgar music-hall jokes of this comedian have for long been a source of annoyance to all who have at heart the dignity of Letters. He has called in question, in a most downright manner, the genius of such men as Ibsen and Strindberg. He has assailed with the vilest abuse such unassailable names as Mr. Joad and Mr. Aldous Huxley. He has laughed loudly and rudely at Mr. Galsworthy and Sir James Barrie. Nothing, apparently, except his religion, is sacred to him. He sneers at the Book of the Month Club. He grins at women novelists. He tries to discredit our system of Parliamentary Government.

The execrably bad taste of this book stops at nothing. The excellence of our public school system is doubted and even denied; Mr. Kipling's verse is parodied; not even Mr. Walpole, nor Mr. Drinkwater escapes the grimaces of this iconoclastic clown. He has a puerile and irritating trick of putting impossible sentences into the mouths of the Established Great. Thus he will make Pater call for a pint of beer, or Browning utter a gross Americanism, in such a way that the insufficiently instructed masses may imagine that these seers and teachers were very much like themselves.

One would not, of course, pay any attention to such a book, did not one feel that the time has come to protest strongly against a certain frivolous and flippant attitude towards Serious Things. One of the lamentable results of modern compulsory education, so desirable in itself, has been to give every Tom, Dick and Harry the idea that he has a right to pass remarks about what he can never hope to understand. A night-school matriculation does not qualify a man to express an opinion on Bjornsen's plays. A series of evening lectures at Carshalton is no passport to the theatrical performances organised by the Sunday Societies. Eugene O'Neill's work is no laughing matter.

Men of outstanding intellect are not ashamed to devote the best years of their lives to the study of modern tendencies in art, and they should, at any rate, be able to claim some protection from the guffaws and the horse-play of such people as "Beachcomber". To call Henry

James "Hal" is all very well in a tap-room, but it is not a legitimate criticism of one whose work, even to-day, we are but beginning to understand. To talk about "Gaffer" or "Daddy" Wordsworth may suit a gathering of illiterate undergraduates, but is not likely to shed any fresh lustre on a country that has produced so much poetry of the highest order.

The author of this regrettable hotch-potch, who is rumoured to be a successful bookmaker, would do well, in future, to turn his attention to the making of another kind of book. Let him leave Letters to those who understand them.

J. B. M.

# *Sophistication and Adventure*

THE PHŒNIX KIND. *By Peter Quennell* (Chatto & Windus) 7*s.* 6*d.*
THE GRASSHOPPERS COME. *By David Garnett* (Chatto & Windus) 5*s.*

THE word Phœnix suggests fire and intensity; thus Mr. Quennell's title is unsuitable, for his novel is chilly. It is also extremely clever, sophisticated, and what an older generation would have called 'thoughtful', but even the thought is reflective rather than intense. The prose has a close, flowing texture, not unlike Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell's, in which day slides into night and weeks into months, without chapter-divisions, without a change of movement or of tone, without a jar; and in this prose incidents and snatches of dialogue are embedded almost with an effect of protective colouring.

The story is told in the first person by Paul, elder of two brothers who live together or travel together, with a hanger-on in the shape of Julian's mistress, the young girl Virginia. The lovers irritate each other; Paul is shocked (his most-nearly intense emotion) by their quarrelling; Julian goes away in order to give their nerves a rest, and during his absence Virginia, fearing that she is pregnant, collapses on to Paul. Paul is moved, though not much moved, by her distress and by a slight attraction, and becomes her lover on one occasion; which, she says with truth, "if it was anybody's fault, was as much my fault as yours". Julian returns; Paul does not reveal what has occurred; the fear of pregnancy turns out to be unfounded, and Julian thinks that "it would be a good thing, after all, if we married". Paul agrees, and it is assumed that Virginia will consent.

One can make any novel sound flat by giving a résumé of its plot. The point here is that the flatness is deliberate. It is inherent in the scheme of the book, whereby everything is revealed to us toned down by the sluggishness of the kindly, sickly, introspective Paul. Paul's emotions are faint, his perceptions only moderately acute, his life almost entirely vicarious. He lives Julian's life, dimly and at a distance: signs cheques for Julian to spend, goes to a party as his shadow and (his one sign of independence) gets drunk, watches him write reviews, and finally, in the same dream, takes his place upon Virginia's pillow. It is a convincing portrait. But the trouble is that there is nothing and nobody adjacent to Paul by which to measure him: Julian and Virginia are equally faint, not providing a bright background for his dusky foreground figure, but drifting in the same medium. And their love cannot burn itself out because, as Virginia herself avows, it has never burnt at all.

This, however, would not matter—a picture of futility could be moving without the introduction of a single significant character—were the reader able to detect in the writer, or in Paul, even if unknown to himself, a scale of values. Futility cannot be interesting unless there is somewhere in its neighbourhood an implied knowledge that this is not all. Mr. Quennell's talents have therefore, on this occasion, been thrown away. But it is only his first novel.

Up to the actual advent of the locusts, Mr. Garnett's brief story is somewhat clogged by the technical details of flying—air-speed indicators, inclinometers, needles ("2,100 revs. a minute"), latitude, longitude; it reminds one of a detective novel in which an inexperienced author tells you every time a character 'selects' a cigarette or walks to the door. Even the descriptions of landscape and city seen from the air go rather clankingly, and there is far too much unnecessary information suggesting the geography shelf in the library. "Two hours after dawn, as they passed over the Dzungarian uplands, just to the north of Bogda-ola, which rose to a height of 22,000 feet in a sheer cliff"—that may be all very well in the adventure books of forty years ago; but it is not what an adult reader hopes for from Mr. Garnett.

But when the locusts *do* come, first providing the desert-stranded Jimmy with food, then accumulating in sickening masses, and finally almost driving him mad, we get our expected thrill. It is still the thrill of the boys' adventure book—the kind which does not repeat itself on

a second reading, as emotions do which pertain to character and the poetic imagination—but it is sharp and genuine. The resemblance of locusts to aeroplanes is never overstressed, but it is there in the middle-distance of writer's and reader's consciousness, enhancing the horrid picture. It is characteristic of the sort of man whom Mr. Garnett likes for his heroes that Jimmy, when rescued, asks no question, has not even a thought, about the fate of his two companions. It is a curious extrovert's world which we are shown. E. B. C. JONES

# "*Westminster's Pride*"

SIR FRANCIS BURDETT AND HIS TIMES. *By M. W. Patterson* (Macmillan) 2 vols. 28*s*.

THOUGH there are men still living who encountered Sir Francis Burdett, a consideration of his Radical years is considerably overdue. The papers for so long guarded by a daughter apprehensive of the intimate exposure of his relations with Lady Oxford, have been released. At last, a picture of the man who shared with Cobbett and Cartwright the devotion of the popular mind, and whose name a hundred years ago held a magical quality in the narrow streets about Westminster, is available for the student of the *Peterloo* years.

It is not a very satisfactory picture. Arrangement of the papers has been entrusted to the hands of an Oxford Don, whose conception of Democracy is apparently derived from the minor works of Dean Inge. At no point does he reveal the assiduous workmanship that makes the *Life of Place*, by Graham Wallas, or the deft handling of material by G. D. H. Cole in *Cobbett*, so notable a contribution to the literature of the time. The *Examiner* does not exist. Of T. J. Wooler's *Black Dwarf*, which for some time equalled Cobbett's own journal in popularity, Mr. Patterson contrives to make no mention. The conception that he lends of Cobbett and Cartwright might very well have been etched in by the fingers of contemporary (and completely adverse) lampoonists. Throughout, Cobbett rages, a vociferous liar. Perhaps he was. But he also happened to be the most significant pamphleteer of the century, and a writer of strong inimitable English prose, an ample quotation of which is the salvation of many a dull page by Mr. Patterson.

Of Burdett himself, it would appear that there are sources untapped by Mr. Patterson—the Place and Hobhouse collections in the British Museum for example. He makes a great ado about the baronet's independent mind, and apparently is quite unaware that in 1812, Burdett was writing to Coke of Norfolk : "I beg leave to be a soldier in your camp, and I look to no other standard but yours, of which I dare promise that I shall under all circumstances, be a faithful and zealous follower."

The truth of the matter is, that while Sir Francis Burdett gathered about his own person much of the democratic fervour of the day, his mind was of a quality at once too lazy and indecisive to meet the currents and cross-currents of the Reform agitation with conviction. He moved best by the stimulation of others. He sat at the feet of Tooke until the death of the latter in 1812. After that he was swayed by Cartwright, and particularly by Bentham, to whom there is extant a letter couched in terms of almost fulsome allegiance. Men who knew what they wanted were always hedging and shouldering the baronet from one position to another. At length, patrician habit and social influences exerted themselves : slowly he drifted into Conservatism, and members in the middle years of the century were able to behold in the House of Commons, a tall, dignified, top-booted figure, and unable to reconcile it with the earlier figure of the legend. There came a moment when, as he confided in Hobhouse, he became increasingly apprehensive of a rising of the poor against the rich.

It would be futile, however, to dispute the positive work that Burdett was able to do as the parliamentary representative of the freest constituency of its kind in the country. He exposed the maladministration of the Cold Bath Fields Prison, and time and again, progressives found him their spokesman in the House.

He was an exceedingly generous man. "Should we not do something for the Major's fine, and poor Wooler ——" he wrote to Place, when Cartwright and Wooler had been convicted of sedition, forgetting the estrangement that had recently existed between them. His intrigue with Lady Oxford was of a piece with his character. Naively dissimulating, he protested no diminution of his affection for his own well-beloved wife.

Mr. Patterson's book is sufficiently notable for a number of original letters. There is a good deal of uninteresting Coutts material (into

which family Burdett married); and on the whole, the volume will serve until a rather more graphic and sensitive hand reveals a Burdett, whose coadjutors are not the democratic clods and oafs of a Winstonian dispraisement; but the high and valiant spirits from whom we receive (however impaired) the democratic heritage.

ROGER DATALLER

## *The Power of a Dandy*

LASSALLE. *By Arno Schirokauer. Translated by Eden & Cedar Paul* (Allen & Unwin) 15*s*.

A DANDY and a revolutionary, Ferdinand Lassalle, the son of a Breslau silk-merchant, struts across the pages of this book like a puffed turkey-cock. Yet he knows, all the time he knows. We feel that whatever the issue, whatever the circumstance, something in him is standing coldly aside watching his fiercest actions, listening to his strongest speeches. We feel that he is always exactly aware what these actions, these words, will arouse in a relative, a judge, or a mob.

Acting as he does with this inexorable knowledge, he is, at times, the very devil himself. He can simulate a frenzied rage, or a tempestuous ardour, and still remain emotionally unscathed, preserving uninvolved his human capacity for feeling.

Yet whatever he does is prompted from within. The power-devil that is in him never lets him rest, but always adjusts its own balance for non-feeling. Lawyer, prisoner, gambler, author, intriguer, revolutionary, Lassalle cannot remain still, but is goaded on, ever restless, by the remorseless craving for power, more power.

Every situation he throws himself into immediately becomes intensified, vivid. Every issue he is faced with he forces to a dramatic and often bitter conclusion. Turmoil, action and dominance are the very essences of his being.

But the gods that be are jealous gods, and from those they have given access to power they demand a human integrity.

"Shall I . . ." he asks, as a young man, "flatter the great, intrigue to secure advantages and prestige; or shall I . . . cling to truth as my supreme virtue? . . ."

He swears before heaven that he will abide by his 'truth'—but fails

to abide by his integrity. Lassalle remains an impish actor, preening and prancing across the stage of public affairs.

The gods, however, have a terrible climax for this abuser of power. He is in love with a woman after having refused her. It is the first genuine passion of his life. He involves all those near him in a belated attempt to win her—and fails. Humiliated, he fights a duel with her betrothed and deliberately falls a victim to his opponent's bullet.

Herr Schirokauer in his able biography is too often afraid that he may whitewash Lassalle. Consequently, he sets himself up as judge, jury and jailer in his portrayal, and claps him into a semi-tone below dark grey. At times, too, he almost buries his hero beneath a mass of middle nineteenth century political events. But all in all he has woven together an interesting record of the flaunting dandy who founded the German Socialist Party.

S. B. S.

# *Shorter Notices*

THE GETTING OF WISDOM. *By Henry Handel Richardson* (Heinemann) *3s. 6d.*

*The Getting of Wisdom* is a good book of its kind, carefully produced and not dull, the fruit of careful memory. And the handful of observations about Australia, the Australian feel of the whole thing, these alone are sufficient to confer distinction on it. In fact, if I had not read *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony* I should have said: "Here is something special"; but who, having seen the achievement, wants to return to the promise, save in the academic spirit?

*The Getting of Wisdom* is a pencil study and *Richard Mahony* full panoply of oils. The second uses two continents and the years of a man's life for its effects; the first but four years of a small girl's schooling: the trite years, the trite experiences of childhood. School is a tiresome world, a grey world, so far as literature is concerned. Not that Miss Richardson was, even twenty years ago, another of those articulate adolescents who put youthful agonies into novel form and so, most publicly, purge themselves of clogging youth forever. Nothing like that. Here is dispassion, the book is autobiographical in spirit if not in fact, but it is the tranquil contemplation of a dead self by one who has come to an equilibrium, even if it is only the equilibrium of know-

ing one's own unfitnesses in order to discover what she calls one's "special fitness."

But Australia is the thing: Australia Felix—the coming home of the native imagination. Not Australian local colour, but Australia itself, with its queer aridities of atmosphere, its blankness and emptiness, its inevitableness. Every native feels that inevitable quality of his own land, for it must always remain the touchstone of foreign experience; but there are few who can produce in strangers a willing suspension of loyalty and expatriate the imagination to its antipodes. We read, and Melbourne ceases to be a minute speck so many miles from London; we read, and find ourselves forced to enter the bubble atmosphere. For a moment we are nourished on Australian soil.

This is the book's importance: it is part of the young Australian tradition of literature; a literature, not of the world looking at Australia, but of Australia looking at the world.

Laura herself is a crystalline object. Sometimes a facet of her gleams. But in fact she is not an organic growing thing. She is repressed, and punished, and falls in love and makes friends and tells disastrous lies and experiences the usual childish terrors; yet she emerges from page 275 the same child precisely as entered at page 1. We are told she changes, we are bidden to note how she changes, but we cannot feel she has changed. At school she is dead, or at least muffled; only at home, with Mother and Pin and Leppie and Frank does she come alive for a moment. There are only scraps of Mother here and there, but she comes out true and bold—a real person, curiously vivid. I think she and Richard Mahony's Polly must have developed from the one original inspiration. They are both lovable, limited Martha-women.

But as I have said, Australia is the thing: and Australia as a background is more suited to an epic than to a school story. M. K.

AN ESSAY ON INDIA. *By Robert Byron* (Routledge).

An essay which approaches the subject of India through history, art, religion, race conflict, politics, and education, which visits town and country, attends a native wedding, enters office, club, peasant's hut, bazaar, that quotes at some length from books and newspapers, and has time for the man-to-man point of view in personal anecdote, all in less than two hundred pages, would be a miracle if it added much to our knowledge of India. Mr. Byron's essay is no miracle. It is a sketch

that roughs in a landscape and works up a pebble or two. The fault of inadequacy makes possible the virtue of generality. It gives something that can be held in the hand. But with India, if we are to believe the experts, that is a dubious recommendation. It may further encourage that complacency of which we have already more than enough.

Mr. Byron maintains that there is a real nationalism in India, but he illustrates it, unfortunately, by the attitude of a Parsee he met, who resented *Mother India*, though he himself was exempt from its strictures. But since the word 'India' applies to at least a geographical unity, and since intelligent Indians in every part of it have been made to feel inferior in the presence of whiteness, it is not surprising that the sympathies of the Parsee lie with that India with which he has more in common than with the interloping Westerner. But unity whose only reality is a single face against foreign interference vanishes immediately the need for it is removed.

Nationalism, Mr. Byron goes on to say, though with the will to rule, lacks the power. There is in the Hindu an 'instinct towards disintegration,' which he blames on the intense sunlight on featureless lands. The contention is that, politically, the Hindu is incompetent. Even if we give him the machine he won't work it. Mr. Byron's hope lies in the rejection by Buddhism of subjective emotions for "the objective regulation of conduct in society". In fact, if Buddhism ceases to be Buddhism, if the East becomes, except for the accident of colour, the West, the problem will be solved. India will have lost her soul—but she will have gained a machine.

From our side the task looms up, higher than Everest—"a radical change of outlook on the part of the English community". Heaven help his hopes!

O. M.

BITTER TEA. *By Grace Zaring Stone* (Cobden-Sanderson) 7*s.* 6*d.*

It is curious to think that hundreds of intelligent library-subscribers will read this book and remember it only as "a thrilling well-told story about Americans in China" and that their verdict, in one sense, will be quite correct.

Correct, that is to say, as a matter of *fact*. But, as a matter of *reality*, the book is a good deal more than this and something very different and

better worth remembering.

Grace Zaring Stone is to be congratulated very highly on the impressive setting (China in the recent troubles) which she has given to her story and her competent treatment of its succession of breath-taking incidents leaves little for the most captious realist to desire. But these merits are not the whole, nor even the better part of her work. Though she writes throughout with a sanity and clear-headedness which are almost cold, without a trace of sentimental appeal and with no resort to the psychic element, what impresses you most about *Bitter Tea* is the scope of the writer's vision. In Megan Davis—the American girl of Celtic ancestry who has come to China for the conventional purpose of marrying the young man to whom she is engaged—Mrs. Stone lets us see, through all the usual features of a charming intelligent heroine, the real individual, the human spirit, "that lonely traveller, the self's self". And, in varying degrees, that is what she is able to let us see in all the other figures of the story. Mrs. Jackson and Dr. Strike, General Yeu and Mah-li, Captain Li and Mr. Schutz, impress us as personalities all the more strongly, because they impress us also as symbols, as actors in a drama, greater than they themselves are aware of, but a drama which, by its very nature, helps them to be, most fully, themselves.

Mediocre novels are so clever nowadays and attain such a high literary standard that their very merits and competency tend to weary the reader and to make him or her distrust the reviewer's rapture and the publisher's puff.

Yet I do not believe that any discerning person can fail to get stimulation and refreshment from *Bitter Tea*. I only fear that it will be a long time before we get anything of its kind so good again. G.M.H.



*Printed by the Shenval Press, 58 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1, and published for the proprietors at 58 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1. Advertising Manager, S. R. Le Mare, 23 Paternoster Square, E.C.4. Telephone: City 9107. Registered for transmission by Canadian Registered Post.*

# *Contents*

SEPTEMBER 1931: VOL. 2. NO. 6. NEW SERIES.

## *Magazines*

THE LEFT. (218 West 3rd Street, Davenport, Iowa.) This new quarterly looked at first sight like yet another of those ineffably boring productions concocted in Greenwich Village and Montparnasse by the "proletarian" scions of American business families. But on closer inspection it turned out to be a paper with an intelligible and intelligent policy, and with contributors who have something to say and wish to be understood. Especially good is Alexander Kaun's article on *Gorky and Lenin* in which he quotes Lenin's remark: "I am not going to argue with men who have gone off to preach the fusion of scientific socialism with religion." In another article Bernard Smith gives a sensible definition of "proletarian literature" and a very fine example of it in Theodor Plivier's story *The Kaiser's Coolies*. Some of the contributions are feeble, but taken as a whole *The Left* can be classed with V. F. Calverton's *Modern Quarterly* among the very few really interesting revolutionary magazines.

## *Lectures*

Those who attended Mr. Murry's lectures at the Mary Ward Settlement (26 Tavistock Place, W.C.1) in 1930 will be interested to hear that the Warden has arranged for a further course of six lectures to be given by Mr. Lawrence Hyde on Thursday evenings, commencing 15th October. The subject will be *Religion and the New Psychology*.

## *Films*

Anyone who sees the Soviet film, *The General Line*, advertised at a cinema is strongly advised to go in. It is one of the very best of the Russian films, all of which are, of course, in a higher class than the average Hollywood production. It is rather tedious and confused in places, but it has an epic seriousness and a fresh primitive humour, as well as some of the most beautiful photography ever seen in the cinema.

# THE GENTEEL TRADITION AT BAY

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# THE ADELPHI

VOL. 2, NO. 6, SEPTEMBER 1931

## *Notes and Comments*

SOME weeks ago I read in a newspaper that M. Laval, the French Premier, had spoken appreciatively of the German Chancellor, Dr. Brüning. "He is a man one can trust," M. Laval said. It is perhaps worth recording, as a pathetic commentary on the times we live in, that this was one of the few items of international news that I have been able to read for a period of months which did not positively increase the sense of apprehension and misery inspired by the world-situation to-day. Everyone whose economic situation allows him sufficient leisure to be concerned about the state of the world at large must surely be burdened with such a sense; and perhaps my personal reaction, under that burden to M. Laval's statement has merely a psychopathic interest. I give it, however, for what it is worth.

I thought: suppose M. Laval had gone further, much further, as he must be capable of doing. Suppose he had said: "Not only is Dr. Brüning a man one can trust, but the Germans are a people one cannot help admiring and loving." And then I thought: suppose one day a Conference of European and American statesmen were to *wake up*?

BY this I was not supposing a miracle such as, for instance, that they should suddenly become convinced of the necessity for realistic and combined economic control of international resources on the basis of so many mouths to feed and such and such an amount of actual and potential food and material. Prob-

ably no statesman, outside Soviet Russia, born so long ago as to be able to take part to-day in an international conference would be capable of such an intellectual volte-face. What I had in mind was merely the fact that every statesman is primarily a human being and that every human being is capable, on occasion, of suddenly waking up and asserting his responsibility as a human being as against his "responsibilities" as a functionary, delegate, representative, wage-earner, or whatnot. Well then, supposing one day an international conference of statesmen, or even bankers, were overwhelmed by a sense of pity and terror for themselves as tragic marionettes, jerking through a tragic farce which involves the destiny of multitudes of others (ourselves) who can scarcely even be described as marionettes, so passive and unconscious is our rôle? Supposing—in their sympathy for one another and for the innocent but disastrously unconscious peoples whose confusion and senseless friction it is their task to palliate year after year but never to cure—they were to throw away all reserve and confess their impotent, but fundamental, good will?

If they supported this gesture by the sacrifice of their careers, pleading to be relieved of responsibilities which conflicted with their sense of humanity, should we immediately replace them by other less sensitive agents? Or would our conscience be touched? Would we discover in ourselves a new power of imagination by which we should see that strict, even despotic, impartiality is as necessary for a healthy social and international atmosphere as it is for a family or a school? Or would the French bourgeois still cling with the tenacity of panic to their "right" to keep the more numerous German bourgeois weak; and would the German bourgeois nourish the idea of "revenge"; and the Middle-Western bourgeois cling to their "right" to collect debts, and profits, from the European market without incurring responsibilities; and would we English bourgeois continue to drift complacently in the fool's paradise of imperial prestige? And would the world proletariat

still sullenly resent its exploitation by capital, without awakening to its own responsibility for its fate?

Futile questions? But perhaps worth setting down as the outcome of what I admitted to be a psychopathic fantasy.

TO some of these problems Professor Dewey addresses himself, from the point of view of an American intellectual, in his little book, *Individualism—Old and New* (Allen & Unwin, 6*s*). He points out that there is a discrepancy between the set of social ideas we have inherited from the pre-scientific age of individualism and the actual social situation to-day. Modern technology, he says, makes inevitably for an increasing *corporateness* in social life; and the individual, whether business-man, artist or manual worker, is thrown out of joint because he is not yet psychologically adapted to the new state of affairs and is consequently forced to seek satisfaction for his needs as a social being in artificial and sterile ways:—

> I can think of nothing more childishly futile, he says, than the attempt to bring "art" and æsthetic enjoyment externally to the multitudes who work in the ugliest surroundings and who leave their ugly factories only to go through depressing streets to eat, sleep and carry on their domestic occupations in grimy, sordid homes. The interest of the younger generation in art and æsthetic matters is a hopeful sign of the growth of culture in its narrower sense. But it will readily turn into an escape mechanism unless it develops into an alert interest in the conditions which determined the æsthetic environment of the vast multitudes who now live, work and play in surroundings that perforce degrade their tastes and that unconsciously educate them into desire for any kind of enjoyment as long as it is cheap and "exciting."

Referring to Bolshevik Russia, he says:—

> . . . I am sure that the future historian of our times will combine admiration of those who had imagination first to see that the resources of technology might be directed by organised planning

to serve chosen ends with astonishment at the intellectual and moral hebetude of other peoples who were technically so much farther advanced.

These extracts will show that Professor Dewey has made a praiseworthy attempt to come to grips with the practical problems of the age. The tone of his book rather suggests that he is not quite in touch with the thought of the younger generation and that he undertook the task, perhaps, in the spirit of a Poet Laureate—"America's foremost thinker" doing some public thinking. But we must be grateful to him for his attack on Humanism and supernaturalism and for his effort to link up his philosophy with every-day problems.

> To gain an integrated individuality, he concludes, each of us needs to cultivate his own garden. But there is no fence about this garden: it is no sharply marked-off enclosure. Our garden is the world, in the angle at which it touches our own manner of being. By accepting the corporate and industrial world in which we live, and by thus fulfilling the precondition for interaction with it, we, who are also parts of the moving present, create ourselves as we create an unknown future.

"Our garden is the world," not England or Germany or France.

A conclusion apparently contradicted by Mr. Murry's unashamedly bourgeois defence of nationalism which we print on the following page. But only, I think, apparently. The point of view Mr. Murry advocates may be regarded as complementary, rather than contradictory, to the sense of corporateness of which Professor Dewey speaks.

R. R.

## JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

# *Bourgeois and Proletarian*

IN his able summing-up of the recent series of broadcast accounts of conditions in Russia, Mr. H. G. Wells deplored the fact that a main aim of the leaders of the Communist party is to make Russia self-sufficient. This objective, he says, "is no part of the world-revolution idea. It is an abandonment of the world-revolution idea." Therefore, though it is necessary for Russia in her present situation, it is deplorable.

The necessity of a world-revolution is axiomatic with Mr. Wells. "We cannot," he says, and he has said it often before, "live in a patchwork of patriotic sovereign states any more; we have to live as world-citizens or we are going to perish." That strikes me as rather rhetorical. In the first place, who are "we"? Is it only we English who must live as world-citizens? If, as I suppose, Russians also are included, and their effort is towards the direct antithesis of world-citizenship (or what Mr. Wells understands by that phrase) is it so certain that they are going to perish? The evidence seems to be rather the other way. Russia, by concentrating all her energies on becoming self-sufficient, is probably going to survive.

In that case Mr. Wells' axiom: "We have to live as world-citizens or perish" is rather the utterance of a particular brand of idealism than a sober statement of fact. The Russians, if their effort towards self-sufficiency is successful, will disappoint the expectations of this particular brand of idealism. Therefore Mr. Wells foresees disaster for them. He is notably the most pessimistic of the observers of the Russian experiment who have broadcast their impressions. But in him the personal factor needs to be heavily discounted. The Russian Revolution is not going as Mr. Wells thinks a revolution ought to go. He forgets that a revolu-

tion goes, not as it ought, but as it can. And I cannot help being reminded of Lenin's remark when Mr. Wells had been to see him, and departed. "*What* a bourgeois!" said Lenin.

Parenthetically, I feel pretty sure that Lenin would have said it, with equal, if not greater, emphasis, of me if I had had the honour of talking with him. But there is one specific sense in which Mr. Wells is more bourgeois than I am—that is, that the background of his political and economic ideas derives direct from bourgeois liberalism. Internationalism, in the liberal-idealistic sense, is axiomatic with him. World-revolution, world-citizenship—such phrases are natural to him. To me, they are just vague phrases, into which almost any content can be poured. It seems to me that a Russian, wholly intent on making a success of the Five Year Plan, has quite as much justification for calling himself a good world-citizen, and claiming that he is working towards the revolution of the world, as Mr. Wells himself.

Indeed, to me the Russian has the clearer justification. Charity begins at home. It is the first duty of a nation to make its own national existence secure; that is its most fundamental contribution to any sort of international harmony that may eventually be achieved. Just as, in a small society of men and women, I can imagine a positive and valuable unity only on condition that each member has become alive to the necessity of allowing the others to be themselves, so in any conceivable comity of nations I can imagine enduring partnership only among nations alive to the necessity of allowing each other's, and fulfilling their own, genuine idiosyncrasy. Reach-me-down internationalism is like a jerry-built house: it will leak at the first storm.

Mr. Wells speaks as though every intelligent person had outgrown patriotism. It has changed from being the last refuge of a scoundrel, as it was in Johnson's view, to being the last prejudice of a nincompoop. I am one of those nincompoops. I have the temerity to admire Russia for her resolution to maintain, at the cost

of enormous individual sacrifices, herself in being; I admire the resolution of Australia in submitting herself to sacrifices to keep solvent; I admire the heroic patience of Germany under extreme provocation. It seems to me that all these, very different, manifestations of patriotism, so far from being retrogressions from a viable and healthy internationalism, are advances towards it.

More than this, I believe that what we need in England now is not less, but a great deal more, patriotism. For there is not, in the case of this ancient and wary old country, the faintest need to associate patriotism with Jingoism and sabre-rattling. Patriotism is surely national self-respect; and at the present moment one's national self-respect is suffering grievously at the spectacle of this country slipping greasily into decay. One feels that England has lost confidence in itself, lost belief in its own habit and way of life. To a certain extent that is understandable. There is much in the English habit and way of life that is obviously derived from excessive prosperity, for instance, that fairly universal reverence for wealth as such which Mr. Tawney has analysed pitilessly in a recent book. But that, I believe, is a kind of fatty degeneration of the English nature; it is not healthy, but neither is it fundamental. We have grown too accustomed to wealth. It is the old story that we learned in our first poetry-book:

> Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
> Where wealth accumulates and men decay.

Karl Marx, from his own peculiar angle observed the process, and Lenin observed it through Marx's spectacles. There is an interesting passage in a recently published essay by Lenin on Marx (*The Teachings of Karl Marx*, by V. I. Lenin: Martin Lawrence Ltd.) in which Lenin summarises a number of Marx's references, in his correspondence with Engels, to the example of the British labour movements.

> Here Marx shows how, industry being in a flourishing condition, attempts are made "to buy the workers," to distract

them from the struggle; how, generally speaking, prolonged prosperity "demoralises the workers;" how the British proletariat is becoming "bourgeoisified;" how "the ultimate aim of this most bourgeois of all nations seems to be to establish a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat side by side with the bourgeoisie;" how the "revolutionary energy" of the British proletariat oozes away; how it will be necessary to wait for a considerable time "before the British workers can rid themselves of seeming bourgeois contamination;" how the British movement "lacks the mettle of the old Chartists;" how the English workers are developing leaders of "a type that is half-way between the radical bourgeoisie and the worker;" how, due to British monopoly, and as long as that monopoly lasts, "the British worker will not budge."

All observed accurately enough, granted the angle of vision. But for all that, perhaps quite fallacious. If England had not become prosperous, what then? On the Marxian assumptions, a resolute revolutionary spirit among the workers, and a bloody revolution. But he totally neglects the characteristic trick of the English nature to bend before it has to break. The specific idiosyncrasy of England by which its political and social organisation is more elastic than others is completely ignored. The facts are explained according to a world-scheme. Marx also was a world-citizen.

In fact, the bourgeois-proletariat opposition does not exist in England; and it is no nearer to existence to-day, when the old monopoly is gone, than it was sixty years ago when Marx was explaining its non-existence. In the Marxian sense, we are "the most bourgeois of all nations;" and we were that, potentially, centuries ago. The industrial nineteenth century speeded up the process. We are the most bourgeois of all nations because we are all bourgeois.

That is no reason at all why we should not have a revolution;

but it is a reason why our revolution should be altogether one of our own. Our revolutions have always been, from the Continental point of view, disappointing spectacles. When we chopped a king's head off, we found it unnecessary to chop off a few thousands more. But we shall not be easily inveigled into world-revolutions either of the Marxian, or of the Wellsian pattern—widely different as these are.

Bourgeois is an unpleasant name. One doesn't like to be called bourgeois. But since we English, for better or worse, *are* all bourgeois; and since we have not, in the past, been found generally lacking in national self-respect, we had better make the best of our bad name. It turns out, on examination, to be a good one. Etymologically, it is at least dignified to be a burgess. And in actual fact, the various qualities which, when seen through Marxian spectacles are evidence of our universal and incorrigible bourgeoisie, are in the main the qualities which make the English habit and way of life desirable. It is, for instance, an obvious mark of incurable bourgeoisie not to feel that the policeman is one's natural enemy, or the government official an insolent jack-in-office. Nothing is more bourgeois than the sense of social security that is instinctive with an Englishman—the primary and ancient feeling that his house is his castle. We are all bourgeois because we inherit centuries of gradual political education. We shall not get rid of these calm tricks of our ancestors in a night.

If revolution comes, and it is overdue, it will not be a revolution which offends against the most deep-rooted of our instincts. It will be nothing of which we, as civilised beings, need to be afraid; it need not, and almost certainly it will not, affect our ineradicable bourgeois nature. English bourgeoisdom is quite capable of making sacrifices. Indeed, compared with what is demanded of the propertied classes in other nations to-day, our readiness to bear heavy taxation without undue resentment is impressive. Our sense of property is by no means so acute as that of some

other nations—the French, for example. What depresses us all is not the burdens we have to bear, or the prospect of bearing heavier ones, but the sense that the burdens are borne quite in vain: that the purpose for which they are demanded is largely futile. Our national energies are being depleted to keep going a system, which we feel instinctively is bound to fail. We—or our governors—are backward-looking; behind their thinking is always the vague and unjustifiable hope that our old monopoly will return to us, or the equally vague and unjustifiable hope that some sort of internationalism will begin. The moment for a nation to think internationally is when it is nationally vigorous: if its national vigour is declining then all international velleities are interpreted (quite justly) by other nations as the mere symptoms of decline.

Just as a self-sufficient Russia will be a more potent influence in changing the world-system than a Russia spiritually dependent upon the behaviour of other nations, so a self-sufficient England will be a more powerful champion of whatever world-ideals we English may cherish at the bottom of our hearts. By suffering our own national strength to decay, we do not advance, we positively retard the progress to a better world-order. The individual does not advance to disinterestedness and spiritual freedom by scrapping his own idiosyncrasy, but by becoming conscious of it: it is not, and cannot be, otherwise with nations.

It may be said that a self-sufficient England is a dream. And probably an absolute self-sufficiency is unattainable; probably, also, it is undesirable. But absolutes are not in question. What is required is a high degree of self-sufficiency, enough to give each several Englishman a consciousness of self-sufficiency in reserve, instead of feeling that he is as a sheep led to the slaughter in sacrifice to some abominable and invisible deity of World Depression.

(*To be continued*)

DOROTHY WHIPPLE

## *"A Lovely Time"*

SHE got in from the office earlier than usual because she had been lucky with buses. She thought she would write to Lucy to keep her mind off the cold. There were gas-fires in the bedrooms at Vale House, but she was determined not to light hers until she was undressing for bed; the meter was a glutton for shillings and ate a great hole in her money every week.

Only one light was allowed in the bedroom, but by means of a long flex from the ceiling she had made it into a bed-lamp, which bloomed now like an orange in the dusk it created. She sat down under it to write to Lucy who had remained at home in Ilkeston.

"I have just come in from the office. It is a cold night, but my little lamp makes a glow, and my little room feels very peaceful after the busy day. Oh, Lucy, it is wonderful living in London."

Yes, it was wonderful, specially when she wrote about it to Lucy, but her feet were very cold. She took off her damp shoes and put on her bedroom slippers. She settled herself again with pen and pad, but before she could write another word, there was a knock on the door, and in came Sheila Spence, with her hair in lead curlers under a pink shingle cap.

"Oh, you're in at last, Barnesy darling," she cried. "I've been umpteen times before. You must help me out to-night. You must come out to dinner with me and Geoff Potter and Perry Gifford. Rosamund's just telephoned to say she's too seedy to come, and I can't let them down. We must be four. Do say you'll come. We're going to Barteolozzi's and then on to a Night Club sort of place. You'll like the chaps, and Gifford writes or something. Do say you'll come, darling!"

Alice—since she had come to London she spelt it "Alys" and

pronounced it to rhyme with "knees"; she would have liked to do something with "Barnes" too, only it was difficult on account of letters from home and that kind of thing—Alice stared at Sheila while her poised pen deposited a large blot on the letter to Lucy.

"Oh, Miss Spence. . . ." she breathed at last. No one had asked her out since she came to London, and now here was an invitation to dinner and a night club! Dinner and a night club . . .!

"You'll come then?" said Sheila. "Cheers. Have you got an evening dress? Without sleeves, I mean? Good. Well, get a move on, darling. I've had my hair in Queen Besses since I got in from the office. What are you going to do with yours?" she eyed Alice's lank locks with some anxiety.

"I don't know. What can I do? I'll do anything," promised Alice.

Sheila considered her.

"Well, I think an Eton Crop's your style," she said. "What about borrowing Shandon's 'Stickit,' or whatever it is she uses for hers, and then you can plaster it behind your ears. Make it sleek and smart, see?"

"D'you think she'd lend me some? I could pay her back to-morrow," said Alice hopefully.

"Oh, don't you bother about that. I'll go and get it from her. She's in." Sheila knew she was in because she had first given her the invitation she now gave to Alice. But Shandon couldn't go, and Alice was Hobson's Choice and must be made the best of.

Alice hurriedly put away the letter to Lucy and fled to the bath-room for hot water. Then she recklessly lit the gas-fire. The first time you went out with young men to dinner and a night club, you didn't stop to cavil about a shilling in the meter.

She sang as she took off her work-a-day clothes. Fancy Miss Spence asking *her*! It was most kind, because she hardly knew her really and yet she called her darling and asked her out to dinner and a night club. Oh, London life had begun! She had been lonely

she had been dull, she had been cold and felt the food at Vale House inadequate, but now the lights had gone up, the fun, the excitement, the experience she had come for were going to begin!

"I say," said Sheila, putting her head in again. "Dutch treats, you know. We're all paying for ourselves. That's all right, isn't it?"

"Oh, of *course*," said Alice, snatching at her cotton kimono.

"It won't be much at Barteolozzi's," said Sheila consolingly. "But it's jolly good food all the same. Got any cigarettes?"

"Oh, I'm afraid I haven't," said Alice. She didn't really like the taste of cigarettes, and only smoked when she wished to be smart.

"Well, you can get some on the way. I'll take some too. And matches."

"I haven't a fancy box for the matches," faltered Alice.

"Oh, don't bother about that. Nobody has."

Alice smiled happily once more and went on with her dressing. She was so glad she had the artificial satin cloak. It was strawberry pink and had a ruched collar. Lucy had made it for her to come to London with, but although she had been in London more than four months, she had never had it out of its box. Now she was going to wear it at last.

She recklessly cut a piece out of the top of her winter vest so that it should not show above her black frock. She knew she was being thriftless and in every way awful, but she was going to have a lovely time, and nothing, nothing must spoil it. The brand-new woollen vest must be sacrificed.

She put on the black dress. It hung from her shoulders as it had hung from its coat-hanger; in fact, there was little difference between the two means of support, for although Alice was twenty, she was as small and bony as a child. She put on a string of pink beads so pale as to be almost invisible, and draped a white ninon scarf round her neck, finishing it with an elegant knot on one shoulder.

Then she moved the bed-lamp to the dressing-table to do her face. No rouge, she decided, but plenty of powder, lipstick and eyeblack. When she had finished, she hung over the reflection in the glass, looking for herself. She was almost unrecognisable, but rather modern and highbrow-looking all the same, she thought, with a little thrill.

"Ready?" enquired Sheila, coming in to look her over. She herself was highly coloured, with dark curls, wet lips, green ear-rings, and a full bosom. She wore a green gown and her black coat with the civet cat collar.

"Oh, Miss Spence, you do look lovely!" cried Alice.

Sheila didn't know what to say about Alice.

"Have you got the hair stuff on?" she enquired, to give herself time.

"No, I'm just going to put it on," said Alice, sprinkling vigorously from Miss Shandon's bottle. "Oh, isn't it funny? It's like boiled starch."

"I expect that's what it is," said Sheila. "Here, give me the comb! I'll do the back. Brush it very smooth. There! Well, I must say it's made a difference to you. Are you ready now?"

"Yes," said Alice, snatching up the artificial satin cloak and her handbag, and casting one more look at her unaccustomed self in the mirror.

"Come on then. We've got to meet them there."

Alice put out the light and followed in the wake of Sheila's scent. The night was cold and murky, but although the satin cloak was thin, excitement kept Alice warm. They stopped at the corner for Alice to buy cigarettes, and then they caught the bus in the Euston Road.

"See," said Alice to herself, sitting happily beside Sheila on the high seat by the door. "Nobody stares in London when you go out in evening dress."

She smiled to think what a commotion she would make in a

tram at home in a pink satin cloak and no hat at seven-thirty in the evening.

She wondered what she could talk about to Mr. Gifford. She gathered that he would be allotted to her, because Miss Spence was evidently keen on the other one. Alice wished she had read the last works of the Sitwell family, or been able to understand what she had seen of the verse of Mr. T. S. Eliot. At any rate, she had read *The Good Companions.*

She smoothed her hair nervously. The ends pricked her; it even rattled a little when she touched it. But it was smart. She thought she would buy a bottle of that stuff when she could afford. It wouldn't be this week, after those cigarettes. When you went out with men in London, they treated you as if you were a man too. Horace, at home, always paid for Lucy. She thought of Horace with some scorn. He wasn't really modern. He didn't quite know what was what.

They got out at Goodge Street and made their way to Barteolozzi's restaurant. It was ordinary enough outside, being merely two steamy plate-glass windows, but when they opened the door, it was like stepping into another world to Alice. Her eyes fell straight away on an enormous negro shovelling spaghetti into a mouth like a stoke-hole, and as she followed Sheila to the stairs, a waitress called down the lift into the kitchen for "Pane."

Pane! How thrilling! That must be the Italian for bread.

"Pane! Pane!" whispered Alice ecstatically. Oh, this was the wide wide world! This was even more than London; it was the cosmos. She would be able to ask for "pane" when she went home to Ilkeston for her holiday.

"We'll bag that table near the window," said Sheila. "They don't seem to be here yet."

Alice followed Sheila to a table for four, and laid the pink satin cloak over the back of her chair. She got out the cigarettes and the matches to be ready, and they sat down to wait for the young men

Sheila took a mirror from her handbag and began to fluff up her curls, powder her nose, run a moistened finger along her eyelashes and redden her already red lips.

Alice took a look at herself in her mirror too, but as her face was still satisfactorily as white as chalk, and her brows and lashes as black as coal, there was no need to do any more. Her mirror was so small she could not see that her hair had risen at the back of her head in a stiff hackle which caused amusement to people at other tables. She sat in bliss and ignorance, looking very small, young and a little peculiar.

This restaurant was a funny, hot place, she thought, but exciting. That notice on the wall: "Bianco Appasito—*6d.*" Was it a wine, she wondered, with that lovely name?

"Bianco Appasito," she said that over too.

"Gifford's always late," said Sheila. "And Geoff's almost as bad."

Alice looked out of the window into a room across the street where they hadn't pulled down the blind. A little Jewish boy was standing on a chair to be undressed. His enormous mother played with him, and his father stood by in his shirt sleeves. Alice felt as if she had looked right into Life.

Girls in black frocks and minute white aprons bustled past their table with bowls of minestrone and folded omelettes and unrecognisable but savoury dishes. Alice was very hungry, having lunched on salad and a new kind of milk, and had no tea at all. At home, she used to have a large high tea as soon as she got in, but now she had to wait until half-past seven for dinner every night. She did it gladly because it was part of London life, but it often made her feel very queer. She did wish now that the young men would come and let her begin to eat.

Still, she must wait, she must bear her hunger, she told herself, because they were the means, the cause of this lovely evening. They would come, dinner would follow them, and then they

would lead the way to a Night Club. Fancy going to a Night Club! It had been one of her dreams, and now it was coming true!

"Oh, there they are!" cried Sheila, jumping up and starting in pursuit of two young men who had turned down the room in the opposite direction.

Alice took another hurried look into her mirror, and as hurriedly put it away again. Her heart beat fast. The young men were here; London young men, and one a writer.

Sheila brought them triumphantly to the table. One had fair hair and the other was dark and dishevelled.

"Barnesy, Geoff Potter and Perry Gifford," said Sheila. "And haps, meet Barnesy. She's a dear and she comes from Ilkeston."

Alice wished Miss Spence hadn't mentioned Ilkeston, but she smiled widely on the young men. Indeed, from now on, she smiled widely at everything. She was so happily excited that when anyone spoke, it was as if a string was pulled and Alice smiled.

Now that the young men had come, things began to happen.

"Hi, Maddelena!" called Perry Gifford, making Alice jump.

A girl came to the table and held Gifford's hand benevolently while they discussed the menu.

"Tournedos aux champignons is the best for to-night," she counselled, her kind dark eyes beaming on Alice whose thinness roused her compassion. "You all have tournedos and sauté potatoes. Yes?"

Alice agreed with the others, although she did not know what tournedos meant. She hoped it was abundant and eatable.

"And four cocktails Barteolozzi?" asked Maddelena. "Two lagers, one glass white wine ordinaire, and for you, Mademoiselle?"

Alice said water, please, and Maddelena went to the top of the stairs to shout down the order, beginning with "Quatro cocktails" and ending with "Aqua." Alice thought she would enjoy water as never before, since it had been called by the name the Romans used for it.

The dinner ordered, the young men turned their attention to their companions. Mr. Potter stroked Sheila's arm with one hand, while with the fingers of the other, he pressed in the waves of his fair hair, or sought the spots on the back of his neck.

Alice was conscious of the gaze of Mr. Gifford and was thrilled. Perhaps he would put her in a book. She began to tear the waxed paper from the new packet of cigarettes to give herself countenance while under the observation of a writer.

She did not see the look he transferred to Sheila before he turned away, a look that said as plainly as any words: "How you had the *nerve* to bring me this. . . ."

"Will you smoke?" asked Alice, with a smile.

He looked over his shoulder consideringly at the packet.

"Perhaps I will," he said.

Alice put a cigarette between her own lips, and striking a match lit first his and then her own. She was very gallant. She felt she had copied Sheila very successfully. Men used to do these things for women, but now it was the other way round. Much newer and smarter, she reflected, and was glad she had not betrayed her provincialism by waiting for him to light up for her.

She smoked very slowly, because she had read once that novices gave themselves away by smoking too fast. Once she managed to blow down her nose, but it was a great effort to suppress a cough afterwards. She decided to practise inhalation in the privacy of her room at Vale House.

"You write, don't you?" she said in a respectful tone to Gifford.

"Sometimes," he answered indifferently. He did not encourage enquiries about his literary activities, which were as yet unsuccessful.

"What are you working at now?" asked Alice softly, in what she hoped was the right phraseology.

"I never discuss my work," said Mr. Gifford shortly.

Alice shrank, and looked out of the window again, but the little

Jewish boy had gone to bed. Mr. Gifford glared balefully at the stiff poke of hair at the back of her head, and again at Sheila, who giggled and went on eating the middle out of Mr. Potter's bread.

Something like a panic was going on in Alice's small breast, as she kept her head turned away to the window. Whatever could she talk about next to Mr. Gifford? He was so Byronic and difficult, and the other two across the table were so engrossed with each other. Topics ran through her mind like mice, but she couldn't catch any of them. Aeroplanes, or had you to say airplanes now? Music, but she didn't know anything about it. Theatres, but she hadn't been able to afford to go to any yet.

"Oh, dear . . . oh, dear . . ." she cried silently. "What shall I talk about? What will he think of me?"

The eternal anxiety of youth! "What will he think of me?" not "What do I think of him?" Poor Alice!

"Ecco," said the maternal voice of Maddelena, placing a cocktail before her.

Alice smiled again. The dreadful moment was past. She leaned her sharp little elbows on the table and drank her cocktail with the others.

"Here's how!" said Gifford.

"Happy Days!" said Sheila and Geoff.

"Thank you," said Alice.

It didn't sound right, somehow. She was faintly worried again, and wondered if there was a little book to be bought on the subject of what to say when drinking cocktails. But the worry was soon dispelled by the mounting influence of a cocktail on an empty stomach. Alice began to feel queer, but happy. She thought her legs had left her, but when she felt for her knees under the table they were surprisingly still there.

Reassured, Alice leant impulsively towards Perry Gifford.

"Won't it be lovely at the Night Club?" she said, beaming into his face.

"That is hardly the term I should use," he said without warmth. "I should say it will be. . ."

He looked at her and left it at that.

Alice felt rebuked for using such a word as "lovely" to a writer who must, of course, be particular about the choice of words. "Lovely" was a slack sort of word; you used it for everything whether you meant it or not. She must be more careful in future. She smiled apologetically at Mr. Gifford.

The ninon scarf and the black dress slipped a little and revealed one small bony shoulder. She left it like that, and felt elegant and rather fast. She did not know her winter vest showed, but Perry Gifford did, and that, as he put it to himself, settled it.

Maddelena arrived with a steaming copper dish and proceeded to serve out the contents. Alice was immensely relieved to find that tournedos were comfortable steaks with rich dark sauce and potatoes in rosettes. She smiled happily and began at last to appease her hunger. Mr. Gifford became engrossed in his dinner and did not need to be talked to. Sheila and Geoff across the table were very gay together and held hands between mouthfuls.

It was only by the exercise of great self-control that Alice managed to leave a little of the steak for manners, and the caramel cream she chose afterwards because it was the cheapest, disappeared almost before she had properly looked at it.

"We'll have coffee at the club," said Sheila, collecting the sums due for the dinner to hand over to Mr. Potter. "Come along, Barnesy, we'll go and do our faces. Find out what Perry keeps mouthing to me about," she said in an aside to Geoff. "I can't make out what he wants. Come along, Barnesy."

Alice caught up the strawberry satin cloak and what remained of the cigarettes, and followed Sheila to the tiny cloakroom, where the paint was labelled wet and they had to keep their elbows into their sides as they powdered their noses.

"Wasn't the dinner good?" said Alice. "It was excellent."

"Your hair's come unstuck at the back," said Sheila.

"Oh, has it?" Alice was alarmed. "Oh, what can I do to it?"

"I think you'd better wet your comb and plaster it down again," said Sheila. Alice thought she detected a faint coldness in her voice. But perhaps it was her fancy, because when she spoke again Sheila was quite friendly.

"I say, darling," she said suddenly. "Could you possibly lend me five bob for to-night. I'm getting short. You know how it is when you go out. And Geoff never has any money. I'll give it you back on Friday. I swear I will."

"Oh, yes, Miss Spence, I'll lend it you with pleasure," said Alice, blushing under her white powder at the embarrassment the other must feel at having to ask a comparative stranger for a loan.

"It's awfully decent of you," said Sheila.

"Don't mention it," begged Alice, handing her two half-crowns, and looking surreptitiously to see that there was still some money left. Lending money had not entered into her calculations for the week.

"Now for the club," said Sheila gaily.

"Oh, won't it be lovely?" cried Alice, squeezing her friend's arm as they went down the stairs to where the young men stood. As they approached, Perry Gifford walked off to the door. He even went through it.

"These writers are very queer," admitted Alice to herself.

"Sheila, one moment," said Mr. Potter, drawing her apart.

Alice stood at the foot of the stairs, holding the satin cloak round her and humming to herself. The Night Club, the Night Club . . . this is London, this is Life . . . !

She looked at Sheila listening to Geoff. When Sheila looked at anyone, she looked from eye to eye, from one eye to the other very fast. Alice tried to do it to an imaginary face, and felt dizzy. She hummed again. The Night Club, the Night Club . . . What

a lot she would have to write to Lucy!

Sheila was coming towards her.

"Now are we ready," called Alice gaily, advancing.

"I say, Miss Barnes," said Sheila, drawing her back to the foot of the stairs. "I'm ever so sorry, but Perry Gifford finds he can't go on to the Club after all. He says he's got to go home and do some writing. You know how it is. If he feels in the mood, he has to go, hasn't he?"

"Oh, yes," said Alice, her face relaxing with relief. If this was all . . .

"Well, you see," said Sheila, fiddling with her green earrings and looking from one eye to the other in Alice's face, which was stiffening again with apprehension. "Well, you see, that makes us three, doesn't it? And three's not much use at a dance club, is it? I mean to say, it wouldn't be much fun for you if you went, would it? You see what I mean."

Alice saw at last, and blushed to have been so long about it.

"Oh," she said hurriedly. "I quite understand. Don't worry about me. I can go home."

Home did not seem to be the right word.

"I can go back," she amended.

"I'm ever so sorry, Miss Barnes," said Sheila, retreating towards Geoff.

"Oh, it's quite all right," said Alice. "Goodnight, Mr. Potter. Goodnight, Miss Spence."

"*Good*night," said Sheila, with a gushing smile, taking Mr. Potter's arm.

Mr. Potter raised his hat a little way, and with a wide, aching smile of her own, Alice left them.

She got a bus at the corner and went back to Endsleigh Street. She opened the door of Vale House with the key attached by string and a safety-pin to her bag, and tiptoed into the hall. She hoped to reach her room without being seen, but before she had

passed the great mirror in the tarnished gilt frame, Miss Taylor came out of the dining-room.

"Hello, Miss Barnes, you're back early," she said.

Alice smiled once more and murmured "Yes" as if admitting to a crime.

"I thought you and Sheila were going to make a night of it," cried jolly Miss Taylor.

"Oh, no," murmured Alice, slipping past her to the stairs.

"Well, it'll do you more good to go to bed early," called Miss Taylor.

Alice murmured again, and reached the haven of her room.

She took off the satin cloak, the black dress, the powder and the eyeblack. Her head ached, her heart ached and she was cold. She couldn't light the gas-fire now, or for a long time to come. She realised with bitterness that Sheila would not pay back the five shillings. She had protested too much. She said: "I swear I will." That meant she wouldn't. Besides, she looked from eye to eye.

Alice hurried into bed to get warm, but before she turned out the lamp, she finished the letter to Lucy.

"I went out to dinner to-night," she wrote, and then paused.

What could she say? She thought a long time, staring into the shadows of her narrow room. She would never be able to be gay and smart like other people, she thought; never know what to say, what to wear, what to do; never be happy and at ease. It was terrible, terrible to be so lonely, so outside . . .

But because no one, not even Lucy, must know that she had been thus weighed in London scales and found wanting, she wrote at last: "I had a lovely time."

## LÉON SHESTOV

# *Notes*

### *The Last Judgement*

KANT postulated God, the immortality of the soul, and free-will. Kant's "practical reason" was openly and authentically bound up with the interests of our transient earthly life. And now, in these latter days, perhaps we can be rid of the need for those postulates. The majority of mankind does without any postulates at all. It lives from day to day, giving itself up to the cares and pleasures of the moment. But the might and magic of happiness and postulates alike are as if they had never been when "dies irae, dies illa" approaches. Man then sees that it matters not at all whether he made postulates or not, whether he believed or not. The Day of Judgement, about which the middle ages were so tormented and which our own day has so thoroughly forgotten, was by no means an invention of interested and unlearned monks. The Day of Judgement is profoundly real. Even our positivistic thinkers feel this in moments of illumination, which of course are rare. The Day of Judgement decides whether or not there shall be freewill and immortality of the soul—and whether there shall be a soul or not. And perhaps even the existence of God has not yet been decided. God also, like every living human soul, awaits the Last Judgement. A great battle is going on, a battle between life and death, between the real and the ideal. And we men have not the least idea of what is going on in the universe and are firmly persuaded that we have no need to know—as if it had nothing to do with us! We think that what matters is to arrange our life as well and as conveniently as possible, and that philosophy, as well as all other human activity should be mainly concerned to make our existence quiet and carefree!

## *Masks of Being*

THE continuity of events in the world and the gradualness, and imperceptibility, of their transformations constitute the objective reason for our ignorance and superficiality; but the subjective reason lies in man's aptitude for accustoming himself to everything. Under the shroud of continuity is hidden the violence and capricious suddenness of creativity, growth, activity. But to grow accustomed is to cease to be moved by curiosity. If an Eskimo were suddenly set down in Paris, it would seem to him that he had been transported into a fairy-story world. But of course he would soon grow accustomed to it—and believe, with the Europeans, that all fairy-tales are mere invention.

## *Awakened*

I TRIED to command the mountain: Move into the sea. It did not budge. I tried to conjure the whole material world: Be shattered! It remained unshaken. Consequently? There is no "consequently"! Once again: I tried to abjure the empty, the palpably senseless, the altogether groundless superstition which was instilled into me, God knows how thoroughly, from childhood up—and again it was of no avail. It is as intractable as mountains, rivers and seas! Let me hear no more of "consequently" and of the "Experience of Mankind." After all, it is not worth while to martyrise oneself in vain. In spite of everything we are not only incompetent but we have not the *will* to break the spell, to free ourselves from the devilish power of what we call reality. Even the events of recent years—shattering enough to waken the dead—have no effect on any one. Mankind waits patiently for everything to become again as it was before and for life to be easy and carefree once again. How many more shakings shall we need?

## *A Comment on the Preceding*

A WELL-KNOWN letter of Tolstoy to his wife from Arsamas: he suddenly felt himself possessed by intolerable, excruciating and unfathomable mental anguish. He felt that some overpowering, adamantine and pitiless force was tearing him away from all loves and loyalties and intimacies—from wife, children, creative art, from his family estate at Yasnaya Polyana, even from life itself. And it was so clear, so evident to him that this new unfathomable, painful anguish was an evil thing, from which he must escape, and that his former world, from which he was being violently snatched away, was good and must be striven for. . . Ten, twenty years went by. Looking back on his past, Tolstoy perceives with the same clearness and certainty that the unfathomable anguish is good while his wife, his children, his books and his family estate are the greatest evils. It is one experience against another, two contrary evidences. Which are we to believe as valid? But in general, need we believe anything as *finally* valid? *Can* we believe? . . .

The believer is the man who wants to possess here on earth that blessedness and peace of mind which philosophy and religion promise. He wants "to have his wages now." There is no difficulty about it. Many, very many, as history tells us, have had their wages here and aroused the envy and jealousy of their less fortunate neighbours. They have, in the words of a Russian proverb, exchanged the crane in heaven (which is only known by unverifiable rumour) for the tom-tit in their hand; that is, for blessed peace of mind in this life. Perhaps one day, like Tolstoy, they will come to be convinced that they ought not to have chosen the tom-tit in their hand, because that entails the loss of the crane in heaven. But perhaps they will never be convinced of this. They will die with the tom-tit in their hand and never come to see the crane, for it is an everlasting law of fate that the wages are not paid twice over, and they have exchanged their birth-right in per-

petuity against a tom-tit. But philosophy, pursuing positive themes, has obviously never entertained these considerations. To it, unfathomable horror appears undesirable as a matter of course and secure possession desirable. But what about Tolstoy's experience, and others like it? On what *a priori* grounds are we to shun such experience?

## *School of Humility*

FOR everyone, but especially for self-satisfied people, it is very profitable to study the works of the great philosophers. Or, rather, it *would* be profitable if men understood how to read books. Any "great philosophic system" you like, if it is long and painstakingly studied, can make us aware of our nullity. So many questions are asked, and always about such important, necessary and essential matters—and not one single answer is found that is even in the smallest degree reassuring! Moreover, at every step, there are innumerable contradictions, and a monotony, an incapacity to depart from a standpoint once assumed. And we find this in the great, in the greatest, thinkers. What then is man, and can we esteem his reason as perfect and divine? Shall we not do better to assume that our reason is only an embryo, a germ of something to be, and that it is our lot only to strive and make a beginning, but not to reach any goal? That not matter, as the ancients taught, but the soul itself exists potentially—*potentia* but not *actu*—and that each of us is only a "potentiality" that is on its way to become a truth, but has not yet emerged?

[The above extracts are translated from M. Léon Shestov's *Auf Hiobs Wage* (Berlin, Lambert Schneider).]

# FRANCES WARFIELD

## *Place in the Sun*

"DO you believe this Œdipus business?"

"What business?"

"Œdipus. They were talking about it over the radio last night. It seems this man killed his father so he could marry his own mother. They call it the Œdipus complex. They say that boys are in love with their mothers and girls are in love with their fathers and jealous of their mothers—unconsciously, you know. I don't believe it. Why, Mary Elizabeth is devoted to me. She comes to me for everything. Mary Elizabeth! Play in the sun, darling."

"But Mother, I'm catcher and the catcher has to stand here."

"No—stand in the sun so you'll get your rays. That's why we're out here: to make you healthy."

"You say that boys are in love with their mothers?"

"Yes, but there's nothing to it. Just dirty-mindedness, *I* call it. Not that I care. I can laugh at a good dirty joke with the rest, if it's really funny. But what makes me mad is that they call it science. Like dreams. They say if you dream about a fire or horses or climbing stairs or what all, it means something. They're crazy, that's all. Why, I dream all the time, especially if I eat late at night, and it doesn't mean a thing. And symbols. Like saying that different kinds of things are—you know—symbols. Some of the women were talking about it out here the other afternoon and I said I just didn't care to listen. I know a good deal about science, I read everything up-to-date, and this stuff is absolutely unsound. Just ask them to prove some of those things if you want to stump them. They can't prove them, and that just goes to show. Mary Elizabeth, stand in the sun, darling, or we'll go right inside."

"You know, these violet rays are wonderful. Now there's real

science. Just stay in the sun for an hour every day or on cloudy days under the lamp and you'll be healthy. I don't let Mary Elizabeth miss a day—either outdoors or under the lamp, depending on the weather. Of course she gets sick, as all children do, but not as sick as she would without the rays, I can tell you. Have you heard about radiated bread? You haven't? Oh, it's marvellous. They bake it with the rays right in it, by a scientific process, so it's twice as healthy as ordinary bread. You're eating the rays, you see. Pretty soon we'll be eating rays right along, they say. I read everything on the subject, as I told you, and I read that they're beginning to raise cattle and poultry and vegetables right under the rays, by some process. It makes them grow much faster and lay twice as many eggs and you can see how much better the meat will be, full of rays. They're starting to can vegetables and fruit under rays, too. Then everybody will *have* to eat canned food because it will be so much better for you than fresh. It will be radiated. Mary Elizabeth!"

"Oh, Mother, I *hate* the sun. It makes my head ache."

"Mary Elizabeth! You play in the sun or you won't have any dessert for supper. . . . You know what I got the other day? Some radiated cold cream. I was passing the counter and it wasn't awfully expensive so I thought I'd try it. I'd read about it and it seemed like such a good idea, putting the rays right on your face in the cream. Well, it's wonderful. I've only used it once or twice but it's pepped me up a lot already. You've no idea how much better I feel."

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## KAY BOYLE

# *His Idea of a Mother*

THE road wound straight on, with a small branch to the left, and there seemed no reason at all to turn and cross the stream that slid along on the other side. A queer thought it would be indeed to follow the cattle path up over the hill.

But the little boy was on his way home from school one day, when he stopped at Drury's Crossing and looked up at the signpost that was insisting that the branch to the left led to Shopton, and the road before him to something else again. It came into his head that the path and the way it was going had been left unmentioned. He sat down there to have a good look at the hill that was stretching away beyond.

Across the stream there seemed to be a great amount of soft, sweet turf, and of greenness spread out all over. Higher, there were trees springing up, as lyrical as dancing women, though all he could see in them was the way they moved in the wind. Beside the stream there was a willow or two drying out its hair.

The path did not quite make the grade to the castle of trees that was bowing this way and that at the top. Just a minute before it got there, it threw up its two small white arms in despair, and was lost forever in the blowing weeds. The little boy sat looking at what lay before him, and calling upon the courage that would take him over the fence and the stream and up the hill.

The whole of the hill itself was spotted with islands of dung, and if he had summoned any courage at all, it perished at the sight of a cow making her way down. He thought she must be on her way down to drink, but when she spied him, she stood quite still and looked at him with her soft dim eyes. He sat hard and small against the fence, wondering if she had any young ones behind her and watching her full sagging throat and the gentle shifting of her

jaw. Presently, another great angular cow followed the first one, and then another, and before the little boy could get to his feet and move away, at least eight of the beasts were stumbling down the stony path.

He stood for a while in the road, watching them lower their muzzles to drink at the water, and the bright beads from the stream that gathered on their sparse beards, and the long ribbons of slobber that hung from the ends of their mouths. Every time they flung wide their rosy nostrils to drink, he could see the clear ripples which their breath tossed across the surface of the water. He had no great feeling of pride for himself as he stood on the other side of the fence from them, for if men and their courage were strangers to him, at least he knew that the delicate thing which the sight of big animals set shaking between his ribs was fragile enough to be the ornament of any little girl. His father had been dead eight years, and what he was like he had no idea at all.

His idea of a mother was something else again. How long she had been dead, he did not know. He was thinking of her as he walked backward up the road. His dragging feet were startling up fine clouds of dust in the roadway, and in the soles of them was more than languor, as if he did not care whether he ever found his way back to her or not. "Aunt Petoo, skee-doo," he thought. He looked at the cows, and watched their tails moving venomously across their bony rumps. "Aunt Petoo, skee-doo."

He found her squatting down in the garden before the house. She had a trowel in her hand and she was prodding at her flowers. She looked up at him and pushed her straw bonnet off her brow with the back of her hand.

"Did ye ever take a walk up the path over the hill at Drury's Crossing?" he said to her, as he swung on the gate.

She shook her head absently.

"Will you get me some water in the can, there you are," was what she said.

The little boy set down his books.

"Don't set your books down there," she said. "Why do you have to swing on the gate every time you come in like that?"

"Did ye ever take a walk on that path over the hill at Drury's Crossing?" asked the little boy.

"Will you get me some water in the can?" said Aunt Petoo.

The little boy walked off with the can in his hand. He was looking around about him, and up, and over, and looking at the house in its vines, and the trees waving and the birds flying over his shoulder, and in this way he tripped on a croquet wicket and fell down.

"Get up," said Reynolds.

The little boy sat rubbing his shins and looking sourly at the toes of Reynolds' boots. Reynolds was the only man he had ever known intimately. His vest was black and yellow, and it was his place to ride behind Aunt Petoo's horses and to mow the grass. He could drown kittens, dispose of rabbits with one whack of the hand, and he could swim. In the summer, he could swim the river with the muscles of his breasts swelling and gathering like snowballs in the water. As he stood above the little boy on the croquet lawn, he was red with anger. In one hand he held a carriage whip, and in the other an urchin.

"Look here at this urchin!" he said in contempt to Aunt Petoo. "He was come across stealing cherries!"

There in the sun shone the flushed and dripping face, the contorted mouth, and the terror of the urchin boy. The little boy himself began to whimper at the sight. When he lifted his hand to wipe off his own tears with the back of it, he could see it was shaking as if in the very teeth of cowardice.

"What are you going to do with the urchin?" said the little boy. He whispered it in terror across the grass.

"Thrash him," said Reynolds. "It's what his own father ought to be giving him, not me!" Reynolds swung about to the old lady.

"I'm going to thrash him proper, Miss Petoo," he said. He held the urchin up in the sun.

"Not here," said Aunt Petoo. "The wretches squawk so." With the greatest precision she pinched off the leaves that sprang up along the stalk of a begonia. Her mouth did not relent. "Take him around by the stable," she said. "The slugs got into the very best strawberries last night. Not a sizeable one for tea, Reynolds!"

"Aunt Petoo," said the little boy, "don't let him thrash the urchin."

Aunt Petoo looked up from the flowers. The little boy was standing beside her.

"Don't, don't, ah, please, don't, Aunt Petoo!"

He spoke very quietly, and the "ah" seemed a strange sound for such a small boy to be making. It was a church, a poetry sound, and to hear him using it for a moment put her out.

"But a thief," she said. "A thief who steals . . ."

The little boy's face was shaking like a small fist in her face.

"Aunt Petoo, Aunt Petoo," he said. "Please, please, ah, please, please, don't let him do it!"

The garden was as soft and melting as an all-day sucker between the teeth. Aunt Petoo cracked off a great bite of it.

"Oh, skee-doo," she said. "Get along with you! Let Reynolds go his own way and you get about yours! I've been after you for water in the can . . ."

The little boy flung himself against her knees.

"Ah, Aunt Petoo, Aunt Petoo," he cried. "No, no, no, no, Aunt Petoo! Let the urchin go once this time, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, Aunt Petoo!"

A terrible look of venom crossed Aunt Petoo's face. He had made the garden go sick on her very tongue. Reynolds had walked off with the urchin under his arm, and the little boy lay on the ground at her feet, biting fiercely at the turf.

"Now listen here," she said. She shook at his shoulder. "Your

Uncle Dan is coming home. What do you think of a soldier hearing all this crying and this screaming?" Her voice would never give in. "It's a shame for a boy and no soldier would bear it."

The little boy lay still.

"Who is my Uncle Dan?" he said, without lifting his head.

"Your father's brother," said Aunt Petoo. "With long whiskers and a sword."

The day had begun to fade away when the little boy started off down the road. That his father's brother was coming back was the thought that remained in his mind. He thought of this until every tree he passed became a menace to him, and his shoe-lace untied and tapping at his ankle made him skid with terror in the gloom.

When he came to Drury's Crossing, he slipped with the greatest glibness beneath the bars of the fence and leapt across the stream. His blood was singing like a harp and he was not afraid at all. As he ran, he startled a little group of cotton-tails across the path. He stopped and watched them scampering off through the impenetrable grass. The water was shining like a mirror far below him, and the willows looked as soft and airy as feathers blowing along the stream.

Milk-weed pods were tapping at the cups of his knees, and now and again the wing of a moth caressed his cheek. The sight of a moth in the room with him made his spine crawl, but here in the dark it was natural and left him with no fear at all. When he seated himself in the deep grass, he felt as if he were crouching on the hearth close before the fire. Even the wind that rose was as warm as a scarf around his neck.

Whether he fell asleep then, or whether his eyes were open all the time, he did not know. But however it was, he had not been sitting there long when he saw the cows beginning to loom out of the darkness and make their way down towards the stream. They were going slowly down, with their heads hanging like heavy copper bells between their forelegs, their jaws endlessly and softly

crunching, and when they stopped at all, it was to lift their heads and call softly out through the falling night.

The deep mellow sound of the cows calling to one another was so beautiful that the little boy tried the sound of it in his own throat. He lifted his head to catch the soft shape of the cows' mouths and the turn of their velvet tongues in their jaws. His nostrils were stretched wide open, imitating the cows' rosy nostrils, which were spread full as harvest moons.

The great dark beasts seemed in no great haste to descend the hill and they loitered here and there in the rich night. Had they been horses, thought the little boy, the least sound of him stirring would have sent them off in alarm, but here were the cows cropping at the grass and munching it almost at his feet, as though the smell of him there meant nothing to them. Any movement he made seemed natural to them, and when he put out his hand and stroked the foreleg of one cow that stood nearby, she lifted her head in no dismay whatever and snuffed deeply at his neck. Such a blast of sweet meadowy odour passed across his face that he shuddered with delight.

It was then that the beast he had stroked bent her knees under her and lay down in the grass. He could not perceive her in the darkness, but from the sound and breath of her, and the soft swing and crunch of her jaws, he knew that she had folded her grey horny hoofs under her heart and was chewing gently there beside him in the grass. When he moved closer, she made no sign. Even the touch of his hand on her strong shoulder did not cause her to stir. When he stroked the stiff, sleek curve of her ear in his open hand, she flicked it solemnly back and forth.

The little boy shifted himself against her and pressed his small lean back into her strong covered bones. The endless rhythm of her cud swung easily through all her rich shoulder and bosom. Great tough ribbons of movement ran strongly through her flesh. The little boy had laid his face against her neck, and there was his

ear stroked and soothed with it. He could hear the soft humming of her belly as it greeted and returned the food from her fruitful jaws. On the ground he could feel the feast of white violets and clover heads that had been spread there before her. As he lay against her he thought of the great full sack of milk that was hanging between her legs.

He was thinking what a comfort it was to have the great warm body of the cow against him in the field, and while he was drowsing, suddenly she whipped her head about so violently that she gave him a fierce blow in the ribs with the side of her horn. When he had found his senses again, he thought it must have been a fly that had disturbed her or else she would never have struck him with such force. This was the thought that was in his head when she turned again towards him and rubbed her great bony face against his arm. Such blasts did she thrust from her nose on him, like a mother cat smelling out her young, that he thought he would be blown down the black field. But presently, when she had snuffed in enough of him, her tongue began to move rudely across his hand, lifting his fingers up and turning them over as if they were so many stalks of clover. When she had done with his hands, she licked her way up the coarse stuff of his jacket and there was his neck and his ear and all the hairs on his head getting such a scrubbing and such a loving as would have taken his hide off had it been anyone else that was doing it to him.

It was when the half-moon was coming up from behind the trees that the mother-cow, without any kind of warning at all, suddenly straightened out her legs and stood up in the grass. A terrible feeling of despair pierced the little boy's heart. But she went ambling quietly off, with her tail swinging, and the little boy himself started reluctantly down the hill. The whole world was returning again under the illumination of the moon. The trees were uncurling out of the darkness, and the grass was moving like a sea. When the little boy reached the water, he stopped for a mo-

ment. In the middle of the stream lay a little broken moon, rippling back and forth. He knelt down and put his two hands about its moving edges and tried to lift it up. In a moment the little moon was rippling back and forth again and his hands were wet and cold.

The little boy crossed the fence and started up the dusty road. The old land-marks were familiar to him in the strange light. When he came to the gate of the garden, some kind of human fear possessed him. It was a surprise to himself when he pushed the gate open and walked up the path. A man, with a pipe in his mouth, was turning up and down the terrace. The little boy stood still for a while and watched this sight. When the man turned again he looked down the garden, and he too stopped in his walk.

"Hullo," he remarked. He had no whiskers.

"Are you Uncle Dan?" said the little boy.

"Right you are," said the man.

"Are you going to thrash me?" said the little boy.

"Is that customary in greeting a nephew?" asked Uncle Dan.

"I ran away," explained the little boy. "If my father was here, he'd thrash me——"

"Hold on, sir," said Uncle Dan. "Gentlemen don't thrash their sons, you know."

The little boy stood staring at him in silence. Uncle Dan glanced over his shoulder.

"I say," he remarked in a lower tone, "shall we walk down the road a bit so we shan't be disturbed?"

## *Suspense*

I FOUND a garden smelling daintily
Of woodbine and of cross-formed gilly-flowers;
While still the night slept raven-winged beneath the cedar tree,
I took the paltry hours,
Sifting them over with my restless hand
Till, with a fillip they seemed gone from me,
Like pigeons blown along the windy strand
Of time. But wearily, O wearily
I stayed and crept wet-foot about the mould:
"What's time to me," I said, "if his heart's cold,
"Death-clouted? Let them spread his corse
"Lint-white upon a bed and deck him out
"With pompous white flowers smelling venomously."
—And then the coloured garden with its rout
Of bees mocked me. With mechanic force
I went and peered at the intentioned faces
Of workmen passing. Time that outpaces
Love and desire and youth, time that disgraces
The pretty gesture of romance, bidding remorse
Damp its few bitter-smelling ashes out—
With squint grimaces
Time leered at me from every foot that went about
Its toil. Long I sat watching
The rank life beat in everything but him.
When isles of cloud were black on the west's red rim
They came and told me that death for a whim
Had passed him.
Stept I from sorrowing, easefully,
As from a ring of soiled warm clothes at night:
And then I went to him
And sat a long time peacefully.

ANNE NORTHGRAVE

## *True Freedom*

HASTEN, Women, you are too long pent
Within the prison of your vanity;
Look wide about you, and avoid your glass
Awhile. This fair freedom was not given
But that you might avoid old errors,
In which the world, one-viewed, is too long sunk.
Whate'er its past your beauty is not solely yours;
It is the counterpart of man's, each
Enhancing other. Up then, now praise *his* loveliness,
Not waiting selfishly to hear yours praised;
Praise not his antic strength, his sportsman's limbs,
Neither applaud his bravery in the war:
But see the white pure beauty of his form
Templing his thoughts. This gives to you and the dim future
The only hope of surety and delight.

ANNE NORTHGRAVE

## *The Love that Kills both Hate and Love*

HATE cleaves the heart: two halves
Warring, hate, love; the rest
Blank white with two bright scarves
Flapping, one black, one red.

Flap, scarves, in unrest's wind,
Then heal, deep cleft, till black,
Rested, and red fade in
Pure blue as poise comes back.

EDOUARD RODITI

# *The Undesirable*

(How it must have struck a Respectable Neighbour)

Wherever he goes, you can reckon on trouble and bother,
Whenever he comes, he turns order and law upside down.
Only to-day, at the Well, I said as I looked at his Mother:
"Ah! he's brought disgrace on *you* and he'll bring it, too, on the town!"

I admit he was started wrong. . . That poor wench, ill in a stable!
The riff-raff peeping and prying! All sorts of improper things!
Mad young roughs from the fields, rushing in with some far-fetched fable;
Mad old men on the tramp, that kept raving of stars and kings.

No wonder he grew up queer.—Perverse like his birth-night weather
*Or* his father—No! No one *knew*. . . But its plain he's son to a fool!
Mooning about, as a child (Lost, once, for three days together!)
Never quite right in the head.—They could teach him nothing at school.

Then, later on, he'd play tricks. . . That time when those two got married,
Up country—(A shiftless pair! Lord be thanked they were none of mine!)
The drink at their feast ran short and the tale to his ears was carried . . .
And he got them some wine, somehow. . . Yes . . Its hard to forget—that wine!

What's he do now with himself?—They say he teaches and
preaches.
At least, he seems sure of a crowd, when he strolls by the lake-
shore.
But, for all I can hear, the gist and one point of his speeches
Is just "Waste all you've got, so as Heaven can give you some
more."

The Company, too, he keeps! Why, the scum of the earth's *his*
brother!
The thief, the harlot, the drunk—That's the sort *he* picks for a
friend!
Times and again I've said, when I've talked to his poor dear
Mother :—
"We must only hope he won't live to come to some fearful end!"

G.M.H.

## *Waterfall*

THE clouds are blown over the hill,
The primrose in the glen is still;
Here are ferns, where by the brown
Smooth rock the water falls down;

And golden saxifrage, and moss
Rough as wild fur, and an oak across
The deep pool, ivy-strangled, old,
And the spray falling cold.

At the edge of the glen the sheep cry
To the lambs on the moor; the blue of the sky
Between the clouds is above me,
And beyond the moors is the sea.

WILLIAM MONTGOMERIE

## *Fool's Song*

IF you want to be warm
Go into the sun.
Your heart will be happy,
Your cares done.

If you want to be cold
There's the light of the moon,
Where your heart will become
What we'll all become soon.

Ashes and ashes—
But shall I be wise?
Yes, like a skull
Who has holes for his eyes.

Of your two lights
The sun for me,
Where seeds can flower
And hearts are free,
And morning birds
Make melody.

FRANCES CORNFORD

ALGERNON WHARTON

## *Summer Ending*

SHE so had written it down herself, *summer ending*, in the diary she kept for—well, in the diary she kept; and put a firm decisive line under it, without passion; much as an accountant puts a line beneath a column of figures. Queer how her first impulse had been to buy an umbrella, though that was practical anyway; it might have been something far less useful. Besides, it was a navy blue one with a black border, and cost her all the savings she had not spent on the holiday. Lucky, it flashed across her mind, she'd got something left.

Year by year she used to spend her short two weeks between the country and the sea, chasing phantoms; sometimes in the heart of the downs, sometimes at the water's edge. She much preferred the downs: they satisfied an unconscious longing in her to have to go home "up the hill". Her diary would, of course, enable her exactly to fix the preference, and she had often been on the point of verifying it; but not yet. Mrs. Parsons, too, was friendly and used to take her for granted. There was never any fuss about rooms, and she never had to "sleep out nights"; in fact once or twice other people had been turned away—on her account she learned afterwards—and that had been rather nice of Mrs. Parsons, as it meant losing the full capacity of the big room which often held three. But she had, in a sense, practically *made* Mrs. Parsons though neither the landlady, I suppose, nor she herself, certainly, quite knew it. That was when, after having seen the cottage from the train, she had, years ago, put it down in her diary for future reference. She had been going there almost ever since, with the family. There used to be her mother, and Mary, Sybil and little George, who all wore large sailor hats and would insist on taking the Irish terrier with them. The first summer was a won-

der: little George got rid of his rather annoying cough, and the seeds of enchantment spread beyond the London suburb. For a long time they went regularly; none of them, least of all she, at all aware how they managed it, though she had as the eldest to work her fingers off to augment the family resources.

Then, her diary showed, they began to break up. The first to go (or perhaps not to go) was Mike, in complications of a rather surprising sort. The terrier's dislike for the sheep had intensified, and Mike would keep worrying them and upsetting the shepherd's own dog; till one day the shepherd said, rather angrily:

"Keep that bitch off the lambs, Missie."

The others all wanted to know what he meant, and Mike herself let out the secret by having a litter of what appeared to be sheep-dogs with fierce dispositions. The notion of Mike with puppies was, though thoroughly discussed, both alarming and expensive, and, in any case, the dog's true nature having exposed what might be regarded as the blind eye of the family, Mike had to be given away.

The following summer the family spent at home, chiefly because in the winter little George's cough had returned redoubled, and he had died towards the end of July. It was queer his dying then, because he had seemed to improve as the spring advanced, even asking how Mike was getting on, and ought really to have been better with the summer, as usual. But later on there was a relapse. Mrs. Johnson, having consideration for her grief, would not leave the house, saying all the same to the others:

"You go."

But Mary didn't care to leave her mother, and Sybil spent the time hoping Mike was being well cared for and wishing she were back with them again.

That was the first summer that she herself went to the sea. It was a real pinch, with living high, and she dared not tell Mrs. Parsons. She had not the courage to receive the kindness of her

friends, or the sympathy that might have been in the circumstances, perhaps, misplaced. The spot was not very well known. She used to sit on the quiet sands and watch the few people pass, tentatively. And tentatively (at first) she would sometimes undress on the beach and lie a little in the sun. That was the strong hot summer of 1921, and the sun's rays seemed to pierce her to the spine. The new sensations that bubbled in her breasts, until they almost ached, relieved her other undefinable pain. One day, as she was having her luncheon, a young man went by with a towel on his arm. As he passed he opened his mouth as if to speak, but dropped his eyes instead and went on. She had watched him steadily all the time, and looking at his retreating back decided that had he spoken she might have offered to share her sandwiches. She looked for him the next time, but he never came. Before she had really recovered she was obliged to leave the tranquil sea, reluctantly.

It was as well she kept a diary, as she had not a good memory, and it would have been unsettling to have been without the recollection of quite important things. And though one might have a vague idea of events, it was highly desirable to have them in the right sequence. So it was Mary who next left the summer party, for marriage with a man from overseas, and Sybil and she were the bridesmaids. Sybil had, by this time, grown into a lovely girl. It was odd one hadn't noticed it before, but she seemed to have blossomed suddenly at the wedding. She had purity too, a sort of unfathomable radiance that seemed to surround her, so that one wanted to be very near. But Sybil's difficult disclosure last year was terrifying. They had often since Mary's wedding discussed Sybil's position, and she herself had been absolved from the fearful necessity of being, in the event of a marriage, the last bridesmaid. But the fact, as things happened, needed support; and there was nothing for it but to attend her sister at the wedding.

"Only us two now," Mrs. Johnson informed her bitterly. Her

mother, however, made no attempt to face the circumstances, and not long after this she died.

With the winding up of things at home there was a pittance by which she might, with the addition of her weekly wages, have softened and yet more coloured her mode of living. But it was also :lear that she needed a longer rest than usual, and she resolved to give up work for a time. Fifteen years in a City office tend to leave one in leisure rather in the air, and the first Monday morning was quite unsatisfactory. She had never before, however, been able to ook forward to so long a holiday, and by the time she had :limbed the hill matters stood differently. Mrs. Parsons received ier with open arms, and she was glad to abandon herself to the trong quiet embrace, cushioned against the countrywoman's vide bosom.

"We'll be alone for a week or two, dearie, before the people come. Your room'll be ready in a tick—just the same."

It was going to be good. The spring air was abrupt and keen; he gusty wind, terrific at times, brought the tears to her eyes. Her veariness gradually dispelled, and her lithe little body straight-ned and strengthened. She used to take a book out to read, or valk further and further afield, or as the air warmed lie once nore on the sunny windswept turf among the scabious that ooked rather Victorian, or shelter under the twiggy gorse.

In June she was startled by a horse that came up suddenly and hied away again. From where she lay looking up it seemed enor-ious, and the man upon it immense.

"Sorry," he said. Some of his lambs had got out and he'd had make a round of the shepherds. He had found them at Thet-ord's.

"You certainly look—happy."

"Well, it was many more than one, you know."

They both laughed. Then she said quickly, as if this time not be too late:

"I was about to have my sandwiches: would you like some?"

In a minute he was down, with his arm through the reins, but would eat nothing, saying that his dinner was awaiting him over the hill. Then:

"Heavens, look at the sea."

"What is it?"

"The colour of your eyes. And you've got a *proper* chin."

He held his hands to her, but she settled herself a little in the gorse, and smiled. Wasn't it extraordinary? He dropped his hands.

"What's your name?"

"Laura."

He repeated it, looking down at her on the grass.

One day he kissed her, lightly on the lips. She pushed him away gently with her hands. But he caught her and kissed her again, several times, more ardently: in the little hollow of her throat; high up at the back of her neck against the lie of her short cropped hair, so that it tingled; then, stripping down the straps, just below the left shoulder where her skin was soft and white and cool. He was so insistent. She must have charmed him, too, by her knowledge of the country, because one day he asked:

"How long have you been here?"

She replied without thinking:

"Fifteen years. I mean I first came fifteen years ago."

"Heavens, I was seven then."

"And I eighteen. Oh! I hope you're not very good at arithmetic. It's a long time, isn't it?"

The way she said it, with a sort of apology, completely shocked him, and he buried his face in her breast.

"My dear!"

She put her arms round his neck and drew his head down.

Year by year, for fifteen years, she used to spend her short two weeks between the country and the sea, chasing phantoms. But here, incredibly, was reality! Little George with his cough, and

Mike with her puppies weren't real after all. The thought of her mother even produced only the ghost of the long uneventful bitterness between them. Like the office. Thank goodness, she wouldn't have to go back. Thank goodness? She could never have said that a year ago; dared not. To observe, as recognition of all these years, the manager's routine of thanks; the evasive respect of the junior clerks; the interminable cheerfulness of the girls. If she were a girl again, perhaps. Lucky, perhaps, she hadn't a good memory. But now nothing mattered but her love. Here on the high downs she was facing reality. True, when she was alone there was a sort of deep physical weariness; but with him, he was such a boy and so insistent: he seemed to infuse her with his own waywardness. So that for the first time she left the downs in eagerness, full of her simple arrangements.

Yet in London it was unbearable waiting for the few days to go by; and when at length the day came the hours spun themselves out incredibly. She walked early, in the Park, under a running sky, and listened for some time to a band playing there. It was remarkable with what success the hard mechanical brass drew the crowd. It began to rain, in little gusts, when she went down at last to the station. There was a slight fidget over her platform ticket as her fingers had gone quite numb. As the long train swung in she repressed an impulse to go out and meet it, and took up a position just within the barrier. The engine chortled violently before it settled down to a long piercing hiss. People poured out of the train, as if their very lives depended on it, as if escaping the monster that hissed so threateningly at them. It was curious to observe how calm she felt now, smiling expectantly at the passengers. A fat man in uniform suddenly cried: "Right-away!" in a high metallic shout, and the monster, freed of its burden and with an ear-splitting shriek, stamped off down the platform in a kind of triumph. The crowd came on endlessly, encumbered with small luggage and all the dead relics of the holidays. She waited till the

last passenger had passed.

Then quite collectedly she went out of the station by the road she had come, into the thronged street, wondering if she would ever again go to Mrs. Parsons. It was still raining a little, and she was about to turn towards Westminster when her eye caught the sign of an employment bureau. She was tired of a City office, but she might conceivably get a secretaryship, even if it meant leaving home and going abroad. But of course the competition was extraordinarily keen (or would you put it higher against her?), and instinctively she seized the importance of one's appearance in a post of the kind. It was then that she bought the umbrella, and because she had not a good memory, hurried home to write it down in her diary. And beneath it, with a little shiver, *summer ending*.

## *Sayings of the Month*

"Ostrich feathers are not a contemporary decoration."

*Mr. Cecil ("Contemporary") Beaton in an article on Ladies' Hats.*

"I liked its sense of values. I liked its restraint."

*Mr. H. V. Morton, referring to the "Daily Herald" (in the "Daily Herald").*

"The elaborate scales of progressive taxation under which—carried now to an extreme excess—we impotently writhe. . . ."

*Rt. Hon. Winston S. Churchill, M.P.*

MAX PLOWMAN

## *Money and "The Merchant"*

MONEY is a dangerous subject. Polite conversation avoids it. You may talk about economics, but not raw money. While it is fashionable to belong to a school of economics, university lecturers have to be careful how they talk to undergraduates about the vulgarity of money. For money is a great mystery. I will lend you my books, my house, even my car; but my money has a rate of interest. You will freely offer me a drink, food and cigarettes; but I must not ask you for sixpence, and if you offer it me, I am offended. Yes, money is a great mystery. Only one race understands it.

There is something sinister about money. It flows around us like water in an English August; yet it is sacrosanct. It is so unstable that the bright sun of credit will melt it into thin air; but the guns of war will bring it out of the sky like rain. Yet it is as hard as rock; the irreducible minimum of social necessity; to-day a collection of figures on paper from which a puff of opinion will blow off the noughts, to-morrow a handful of hard coins wherewith to build the only barrier that will stand between us and ignominy.

Money is so commonly the measure we unconsciously apply to men that he who speaks of it critically will be quickly "sized up." The shrewd never tell of their own. "Put money in thy purse," says Iago; and we take his advice, as secretly as possible. Income tax communications are strictly private, and what a man is "worth" is divulged only at his death. Rate money higher than wisdom, and in the world of men you will pass unreproved; for money is the token of civilised self-preservation, and fear insists upon the first law of nature. So money has a permanent place in all our thoughts. Our social roots are in money; no one can be allowed to live without it. We are tied to money. It is the shore to

which every human craft is anchored, and will remain anchored until mankind has learnt the greatest lesson history can teach it—how to live by a more spiritual means of exchange.

A large measure of disregard for money is one of the few things fools and wise men have in common; but they have it between them with this difference, that whereas wise men have a higher sense of value, fools have none at all. The task of the wise is to make the object of their higher esteem apparent, so that in the eyes of all men the regard for money will go by default. And this is difficult, because the object of their higher esteem is life itself, which is indefinable. The value of life we can only appreciate obliquely: the value of money is immediate and direct. So the money-bird in the hand is esteemed above the living-bird in the bush. The task of wisdom is to teach men to love and enjoy what they cannot grasp.

The arts provide us with the wise man's talisman. They proclaim consistently the higher value, and they constitute the only activity of man that does this consistently. Science does not proclaim the value of life any more than it proclaims the value of money, though pure science may be almost an art. But pure science would soon die were it not for the human sustenance constantly given to it by applied science; for knowledge is in itself, strictly speaking, valueless: to be humanly appreciable it must be made serviceable. Art, on the other hand, is directly appreciable. Its worth lies in its assertion of the value of life above all other values. Art cannot be bought, for its value is beyond money in the sense that it is beyond the valuation money is capable of making. Therefore to appreciate art is to take the first step towards a world in which men will live by a more spiritual means of exchange than money. The farmer who loves to grow corn for its own sake has taken this step. Anything appreciated for its own sake destroys the money-value. This explains the truth of Blake's aphorism: "Where any view of

money exists art cannot be carried on."

Of course the idea of living by a more spiritual means of exchange than money is highly romantic: it has never been done—at least, not successfully for any length of time. But the idea persists in spite of experience, and its persistence is prophetic. Sooner or later we shall have to translate it from the region of romance to the world of fact, or the idea will poison us. The perpetual rule of life by money life will not endure.

That is really what Shakespeare was saying in *The Merchant of Venice*—his most often misinterpreted play. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch* regards it as a heartless fairy tale. This seems a heartless opinion, for it is undoubtedly a romantic comedy of heart's desire, designed to throw the life-value and the money-value into the strongest possible contrast.

A play that ends where it begins, in a world in which good-fellowship is the ruling principle. The only currency these Venetians understand is the currency of friendship where he who has is debtor to him who has not, where the only enemy is the man who will not accept such currency but exalts a lower meed of worth and sanctifies it in the name of justice. He is the enemy because the gratification of his desires would drag life back from a civilised to a comparatively barbaric state. He is the enemy because he would check the free flow of money, which should move as healthfully as blood in the human body, and by the incision of usury play the vampire. Shylock is a symbol of the Mammon that can only be served by the negation of God; to sentimentalise him, after the modern fashion, is not merely to damage but to destroy the action of the play. Shakespeare made him human and so pointed the way to his redemption; but he left him inhuman as well, and thereby showed a subtlety and a truth to life which he emphasised again in the character of Iago.

* *Shakespeare's Workmanship* by Sir A. Quiller Couch (*Cambrige University Press*) 5s. net.

Money is to-day what Shylock was to the world of Venice—the forbidding aspect, the dark principle, the shadow in the sun, the grim necessity. Its logic is inhuman. It has principle, but its principle is insufficient for the flexibility of human life. The problem is how to circumvent it without destroying the foundations of justice. And the answer is, by compelling it to the strictest interpretation of its own logic.

That was how Portia solved the problem. She took the Jew at his word and kept him to it. "A verbal quibble?" Not at all; on the contrary, the turning upon itself of the weapon of logic basely misused in its attack upon life. And Shylock was convinced by the only means that would carry conviction.

By such a piece of strict rationalisation would money be convinced to-day. 'Realise your wealth,' said Portia. 'Liquidate it in the open court. If you cannot do this, your inability disproves your claim. There is no entity in money. Even as flesh is mingled with blood, so inseparably and inextricably is this, for which you claim a sovran right, woven in the fibres of life.' Compel money to be strictly honest, and it will lose its power to terrorise. Confine it to the work of exchange, and it will lose its power to beget. For money that breeds is the anomaly: in the act it has assumed an attribute of the creature, and when its life is threatened what can it do but seek compensation in flesh?

The theme of *The Merchant* is the interdependence of human beings in civilised society—an inviolable interdependence. This is the idea that Shylock outrages. It appears most obviously in the Trial Scene where a man stands wholly dependent upon a woman. It is shown in Portia's dependence upon her father's will, her maid's cheerfulness, and Bassanio's love. It runs like a thread through the play showing itself in the dependence of Bassanio upon Antonio, of Gratiano upon his friends, of Old Gobbo upon Launcelot, of Lorenzo upon Jessica, even of Shylock upon his daughter and his friend, and in the dependence of all of them

upon favour and circumstance. All the sympathetic characters are shown as living in happy human interdependence. On them the sun of fortune shines in the end: they come to weal. All who arrogate to themselves wealth or merit (not only Shylock, but the braggart Princes of Morocco and Aragon) come to woe.

The play is a romantic allegory.

> "If we press the *Odyssey*, *Paradise Lost*, even *The Ring and the Book*, as if we press *Bluebeard*, *Cinderella*, *Little Red Riding Hood*—they are almost always true to imagination, usually to emotion, seldom to fact. Circe in fact no more turned the companions of Odysseus into swine than Cinderella's godmother turned the pumpkin into a gilt coach; Satan never addressed that speech of his to the fiends in council: at any rate there were no reporters present. And likely enough Mammon followed Belial with a plain 'Hear, hear;' content, like many another eminent financier, to let a clever youngster do his sophistry for him. Nay, if we take *The Faerie Queene* or *The Pilgrim's Progress*, or any great allegory, ancient or modern, what have we but a naked, deliberate, and successful attempt to inculcate truth by narrating that which never happened and never could happen."

The passage is taken from Q's essay in praise of *Cymbeline*. He would little think of applying it to *The Merchant of Venice*, for *The Merchant* fairly sticks in his gizzard. Among his delightful, judicious and apt appreciations—full of the humour of sound proportion and graced by a spirit of delight that reflects the soul of Shakespeare—only *The Merchant* comes in for double-damnation. "He failed to find any heart in it"—a play written from the heart, in defence of the heart, and in which the heart alone triumphs! Antonio, who wears a suggestion of the cloak of Prospero, gets called "an experienced man of business;" and of these faithful friends and lovers he says "every one of the Venetian *dramatis personae* is either a 'waster' or a 'rotter' or both, and cold-hearted at that." Bassanio, that typical Elizabethan courtier, is just "a predatory young gentleman" who takes "a two to one chance against him;" and "the pound of flesh and the caskets are

monstrous and incredible."

Well, it just depends whether you look upon them as fact or allegory. Sir Arthur has denied his own precept. There is a harmony in *The Merchant of Venice* too fine for us to hear while the muddy vesture of economic security doth grossly close us in; it is a harmony such as criticism in the opulent nineteenth century was not likely to hear. Can we hear it? Perhaps not. But Shakespeare trusted to an audience so romantic at heart and so adventurous in spirit that it could readily imagine a world in which the principle of avarice might, without pity, be given leave to hang itself, and another world, foreshadowed in the closing scene, wherein the principle of friendship inspires such exquisite concord heaven and earth are constrained to join in the marriage-making.

## *More Sayings of the Month*

"I considered that I was a friend and ally of France when I subscribed to her Five per cent Loan, issued in England, and handed over from my bankers £31. 15*s.* in gold on the promise that France would repay £39. 14*s.* on a given date."

*An indignant letter-writer to the "Daily Express."*

"He was generally anti-European, ferociously anti-English, and scornfully and grossly anti-Christ . . stamped on the chivalry of the great Charlemagne . . . Blond Beast. . ."

*From a description of Nietzsche in a letter to the "Morning Post."*

## JACK COMMON

# *Nineteen*

WHEN the curtain went down on the last act of *La Bohème* they stood up immediately, glad to escape the discomfort of a gallery seat and eager, too, to take a last look down at the little glimmering stage below where the performers now assembled to take their applause. That last glance was a sort of seal upon the night's entertainment, fixing it in the memory. There stood Mimi arisen from her deathbed but with the romance of her pathetic end still about her; and Rodolphe whom one does not love so well but who gains our sympathies at the last; and Colline the friend we all wish for. Romantic trinity, bowing themselves out of their parts before the dim-lit house and the rolling plaudits.

He stood straight, gazing at the stage but dissociating himself from the applause which, being too voluminous, affected him with a sort of shyness for the actors. She leaned forward and rested an arm on him to balance. He was proud to be her support. This was his first love, and he was nineteen.

Then, hurrying so as not to be caught by the national anthem, she gathered her things and they began moving along the aisle picking a way among people's knees and orange peel. Just as they reached the gangway the lights flashed on; the strange multitude of applauding shapes and white faces became an ordinary crowd of clothes, and spectacles, and limbs; and the introductory rumble of the anthem began. But Ella and he were safe through the doorway and among the advance contingent tripping down the stairs for the exit.

The theatre opened on a windy, silent side-street in which was a row of taxis, and a white globe of electric light with "Gentlemen" printed on it over an underground lavatory. Beside the

taxis stood three heavily-clothed men like Cossacks waiting for fares.

Ella shivered and fastened her little fox about her neck. He was lighting a cigarette against the wind and when he had finished she tucked her arm in his and they hurried off to the tram-stop.

"O-oh, it's cold," she shivered, as they awaited the dilatory tram, which was just turning the bend in the road, losing its lights, while the trolley shot blue sparks, then steadying like a ship and blazing forth again. "But wasn't it good?"

"Fine. Miles better than *Butterfly*. Better story."

"Yes, isn't it? I love that last scene. She's a splendid Mimi. I'm so glad we went."

"Here we are," said he, as the tram ground its brakes and the line of windows with the dummy faces came to rest.

They pushed among the group of passengers, mounted the steps, and shoved along the gangway. There was only one seat which she took, while he grabbed a strap and swayed to the jolt of starting.

They did not talk on the journey, partly because of the difficulty of bending down, but mainly because he was a little shy of talking to her before strangers. He was immensely proud to be seen with her, to have a sweetheart and travel delightfully paired, but he was so new to it all that he was not sure he knew how to behave, and to talk would subject him to the criticism of these distantly malevolent passengers. This young man next to him, for instance, had a contemptuous glance and obviously thought *himself* much more capable of entertaining a pretty girl.

She *was* pretty; a dark fluff of hair curled on her cheek and through it one could just see the delicate shell of her ear. Oh, to be witty and keep her always laughing, or to be masterful, or admirable, so that one did not feel so uncertain about her affection! How is it that people in books find it so easy to make love, and one's acquaintances never confess any difficulty, yet oneself

is such an awful fool that any conversation comes easier than the language of the heart. But then to Ella you couldn't say made-up things, and however much your heart ached no words came but stupid ones.

The tram-wheels ground on a steep bank and set up a long moan. Six great windows of a draper strolled blankly by. Ella looked up and smiled. It was time to get off.

The tram-lines shone in the light of a great moon which lit the roofs so plainly you could count the tiles and watch the shadows of thinning smoke from the chimney-pots waver there. But the other side of the road was a black wedge of shadow and in it a policeman was standing. Past him they hurried, not meeting his eye, the eye of the law. Ella stooped to avoid the wind.

"Oh, dear, dear! Aren't you cold? Come, let's hurry."

"It's healthy weather, Ella. A splendid night, I think. Look at that moon. Isn't it marvellously bright?"

"It is a beauty; you can see the mountains on it. Wouldn't like to live there, though."

"Wouldn't you? Why not? Just you and I, Ella. With a moon to ourselves. I think it would be wonderful."

"Silly, you're making me shiver. It would be so cold up there."

"I'd keep you warm."

"Would you? I wish you would come along to our shop then. It's been freezing in there to-day. And Miss Hales would have the window dressed as usual. How would you like to stand by a cold shop-window with the draught from the door cutting through you? Miss Hales never notices the cold. She's so cold-hearted herself it doesn't make any impression on her. You know, Miss Carter's hands are in a terrible state with chilblains and Old Hard-as-nails, that's what Belle calls her, caught sight of them to-day, she says, 'Look at your hands, Miss Carter, can't you do something about them?' Belle says, 'Well, Miss Hales, it's the constant hot water, they never get a chance to heal.' Halesie wasn't

taking the hint. She says, 'I've cleaned plenty of windows in my time and I never had hands like those. You must see about them. The sight of them is enough to drive customers out of the shop.' Belle came across to me and whispered, 'No, and I never had a face like hers. Something's got to suffer; I'm glad it's only my hands.' Belle's a scream; if she wasn't there, I don't think I could stick it. And she'll be leaving in a few months' time."

"Will she?" said he, thinking of other matters.

"Yes, her boy has got a good job now and they will be getting married soon as he has saved enough."

He was thinking as he watched her bright face how curious it was that she took so much delight in relating the trivialities of the day, wasting the time precious to them which might be given to more significant conversation. Perhaps it was because he did not take the lead forcibly enough. Or was *her* love of a lighter, less-absorbing sort?

They turned the corner of her street and the usual little panic assailed him. The distance was so short to her door and sometimes she disappeared behind it after a brief goodnight. That left his evening pitiably truncated. What he wanted was a long pause in the shop doorway nearby, where he might hold her close to him, inhaling her fragrance, and taste the desirable no-taste-at-all of her lips. He walked in silence until they came to the doorway. Then he put his arm round her waist and said, "Let us stay in here to say goodnight."

"No," she whispered, resisting, "It's late and I'm so cold."

"But I'll keep you warm. Just for a minute or two, Ella."

"No longer, mind," she whispered.

He caught his heel against the door and the noise startled him, it was so loud. Then he wedged an elbow into the corner and brought her close to him. He kissed her and felt full of pity because her lips were so cold.

"Poor little thing. Poor little Ella."

But she pushed him off to arrange a strand of her hair which had escaped and was blowing about her cheek.

"Are you warmer now," he whispered.

"Not very."

"It is sheltered in here. Keep close and you will soon be warm."

"But you are shivering."

"It is because I love you, Ella," he said, confused, and trying to stop it.

"Silly," she said.

He kissed her again.

Then she drew her head away and looked over the silent roadway. He didn't know what to say next, he was so glad to have her close like that, and so aware that something should be said and that he should kiss her again and again many times, and that kissing was no use either. The moonlight lay on the pavement and on the cobbles beyond the pavement, a strange silent light. In the quiet, little things stood out like gems and were distinct. There were black streaks of frozen water in the gutters, and between the cobbles tiny wedges of shadow; a piece of paper fluttered but could not get away from the middle of the road, or would it not have sailed upward to the moon like a great white moth?

His back was turned to the street and all he could see was the angle of the shop window, an oval flaw in the glass sparkling, and a dusty pyramid of cigarette packets with a dead spider on one of the ledges. It was better to look at her; to watch the white curve of her cheek against the fur and her eyelids fluttering when she had stared too long.

"Wouldn't it be splendid, Ella, if we could go away to-night, and wake up to-morrow in a village miles away. Or, outside a village, a little cottage of our own. A little cottage on a slope with trees and fields all in front of it, and a river below where we could go for walks. And hurry back at night, run up the hill and have a

big fire burning. You would look so pretty in the firelight."

She looked up at him curiously, and he kissed her.

"Do you love me, Ella?"

"Yes."

"Wouldn't that be better than working in a shop?"

"Rather. I'd miss Belle though. I'll miss her when she gets married. Do you think she's in too much of a hurry?"

"Eh? I don't know," said he, taken aback.

"I don't believe in long engagements though. Do you?"

"Oh, no," he said, pursuing his own thought and impatient of the interruption. "There are so many marvellous places to live in. I'd love to take you round the world. If we could set off to-morrow——"

Just then a church-clock struck; its distant boom rippled over all the moonlit roofs. He held her closer.

"No, I must go. Half-past eleven."

"One more kiss."

She held up her face. Her lips were warm.

"There! Let me go now."

He released her. They left the shop doorway, and a few paces further on she gave him her hand and said "Good-bye."

He said, "Good-bye, Ella. See you to-morrow night."

While he strode awkwardly over the cobbles, self-conscious lest she were looking after him, her door banged and simultaneously a cat nearby set up a long wail. In the following quiet he could hear the ring of his footsteps echoing up the sleep-bound houses and the gas-lamp on the corner singing to itself through a defective mantle.

He was very much in love; so much that he was unaware what it was that had come to him, for this emotion caught him up beyond analysis, and he did not in the odd ecstasy remember the creature he had been. The strains of *La Bohème*, which echoed in his ears once more now that he was alone, reminded him how sad

a thing love is, and the memory of Ella's bright little face looking out on to the cold street seemed to confirm it. Why was the pleasure he got from her company such an unhappy one? The tenderness he felt hurt him, and seemed unreasonable. Perhaps it was because he was a poor creature tragically incomplete.

For instance, every fellow he met told tales of his conquests. "Out with a wench last night," they said. "Had a good time. She was a hot piece of goods." And he never spoke of Ella to anyone. Did girls talk like that among themselves? Well, she didn't. No.

He reached the hill leading down to his own suburb, and from the trees of the park on the other side of the road a trail of smoke came. Winter leaves burning. The pleasant smell of wood-smoke scattered his thoughts as he looked through the trees to a wide field of frosted grass. Above it the air was crystalline and one could feel the silent penetration of the moon's rays. One could imagine them raining down, a silent fall of electric radiance throughout the night, falling on roof-tiles and sheltered sleepers for the most part, but here and there on unprotected lovers making a miserable retreat from romance and beauty.

It was absurd that Ella and he should part and go the ways of office and shop. Suppose they had caught a train to London now, or—well, why not London?—and were even now sitting together by a train-window watching the silvered leagues slip away. And if they had a little house to live in—no hotels—what an adventure sitting by the fire would be! Then when they drew the curtains and looked out at the frost-rimed roofs, for once it would not be on distance that separated them but on a world easily shut out.

Easily shut out, he repeated mentally as he felt for his latchkey.

His bedroom was chilly and the tick of the clock reminded him of the oncoming morrow. Fortunately he was always quick at undressing and in a moment or two his trousers were folded over the bedrail, a chair pulled silently close to the bed, his cigarettes, matches and the clock placed on the chair, and he jumped into bed.

Slowly his body warmed; presently it was sufficiently warm for him to forget about it. He closed his eyes and soon the pale roses of the wallpaper which the moon had robbed of colour faded from his mind, and the endless problem of Ella came to occupy him again. And again. His thoughts ran in a sort of rhythm: first a dream of what they might do together, and he do for her; then a memory of what she had said or how she had looked; then a feeling of shame at his omission to be alert and witty or entertaining, and of reproach for being a fool and an incompetent; then again the happy dream.

When this had gone on as long as he could stand it, he got up and lit a cigarette. The room was brilliant with moonlight; it ran in a rippling line along the folds of the curtains, and plunged silver in the mirror of the dressing-table; but the moon itself was now out of view. He stepped over to the window and stood in his shirt looking out.

Was Ella sleeping or did she too think of her love? As he stared out at the chimney-pots and the bright shield above them, he remembered her standing in the doorway. She said, "Do you believe in long engagements?" Odd things she asked. He nipped the end of his cigarette and sprang back into bed.

Half-a-mile away in a smaller, cosier room the creamy bars of light which broke through a latticed blind lay on a coverlet and on the face of Ella. She was sleeping. She had been asleep for an hour.

## OSBORNE DOBELL

# *What is Ugliness?*

ONCE upon a time there was an essayist, who considered himself rather a good essayist, and who was asked by one of his friends to define ugliness. He wanted to write an essay to satisfy mankind, and, what was more difficult, to satisfy himself. So he took up his pen and thought (he always thought better with a pen in his hand because he was an essayist); he wrote "What is Ugliness" at the top of a sheet of paper and came to the conclusion that the best thing to do was to write a parable. And this is the parable he wrote :—

Once upon a time, soon after the Great War, there were three travellers in the Pyrenees. One was an artist, a tall, lean man with thin sandy hair and a weedy beard. He wore khaki shorts, a shirt open at the neck and an old house-colour scarf which he had won for running; he was so proud of this scarf that he never went without it, even when it made him so hot that he nearly expired. He carried his personal luggage (which consisted of dirty silk pyjamas, a toothbrush and a bottle of fruit-salts), together with some sketching apparatus which he seldom used, in a rucksack on his back. He travelled on foot. The next traveller was a poet. He was disgustingly fat and rather dirty, but had a jovial face and a sense of humour. He carried his luggage (several notebooks, some pencils and a foul pipe) in his pockets, and rode upon a mule which had started the journey as fat and dirty as its rider, but by this time was considerably thinner and far dirtier. The third member of the party was a youth who was a genius (or so he said). He was neither an artist nor a poet, nor, so far as we can discover, anything else. He envied the artist's beard, but, being unable to grow one himself, shaved very publicly every day and said that he had always thought beards unhygienic. His luggage

(which included evening-dress, a new suit, clean shirts and a silk dressing-gown) was carried in a trunk, which was carried by a train. He rode an ass for reasons of economy (or so he said).

These three travellers descended a valley into France and stopped at a small town for a time. It chanced that there was a fair in the town which the poet insisted on visiting (he wanted to go on a roundabout); the artist said he would come with him to look for "types"; and the youth went too. When they got inside, the man would not let the poet go on a roundabout as he was afraid it might break, so the poet, to cheer himself up, went into a queer little place at one end of the fair, and his companions went too. There they found some of those bendy mirrors that make you look all funny. The artist was not really interested, and the youth (who liked mirrors, but not the sort that make you look funny) was rather disgusted; but the poet thoroughly enjoyed himself. The one that makes you look thin made him look quite handsome, and the one that makes you look stout made him look excruciating. That evening, after a meal, they were all sitting smoking in the inn, the artist a cigar, the poet his pipe and the youth a Russian cigarette, when the poet suddenly chuckled. The others took no notice,—they had got used to that sort of thing. So he said, "How funny I looked in those mirrors"; the youth replied sourly, "Not funny—ugly"; and the artist said, rather unkindly, "I should have said he was less ugly in them than in real life." Then the youth, who liked philosophical discussions, said, "Well, anyway, what is ugliness?" The poet grunted, knocked out his pipe, and said, "To answer that, my boy" (he always addressed the youth as "my boy," because he knew it annoyed him), "I must tell you a parable." And before the others could stop him he began:—

Once upon a time, about a thousand years ago, there were three travellers in these mountains. One was an emperor in disguise, who rode on a white ass. He was in disguise because he had lost his empire, and he didn't want everybody to know that he was an

emperor and point at him and say, "Look, there's an emperor without an empire." But you could tell he was an emperor all the same, because in those days emperors looked like emperors. The two others were his troubadour and his wizard. Anyone could tell which was which, because the wizard wore a tall, conical hat, which in those days was a symbol of wisdom, though it has recently fallen into disrepute and had its symbolism reversed. The troubadour wasn't much good really because he always sang melancholy songs; but this may have been because he hadn't got an ass like the others, and had to walk. The wizard was always falling into trances, and whenever he fell into a trance he fell off his ass, and the others had to wait for him to come round again. And when he came round he had always discovered something; but it was always something that was probably untrue and anyway irrelevant, like, "the earth does not go round the sun, neither the sun round the earth, but they both go round a common centre; and that is where we shall go when we die; the side near the sun is hot and known as 'Hell,' and the side near the earth is cold and known as 'Heaven'; and as the earth and sun go round, so Heaven and Hell go round, so that no one is ever in either for very long at a time."

One day the travellers stopped to rest by a stream; and on glancing into the stream they saw their reflections all jiggly, because the water flowed over the rocks so fast. The emperor cursed the stream, for he said it made him look ugly; but the troubadour said, "Not ugly—funny." "Anyway," said the wizard, "what is ugliness?" "To answer that, old man," said the troubadour (he always called the wizard "old man" because he knew it annoyed him), "I must tell you a parable." And before the others could stop him, he began:—

Once upon a time, about a thousand years ago, there were three travellers. They were all very wise and rode on camels. They wore appropriate clothes for wise men on camels, and were

riding westwards from Thibet or somewhere like that, and following a star. They all looked so similar that it was difficult to tell which was which, and anyway it didn't matter much for they were all wise; so people just called them the Three Wise Men and didn't bother about distinguishing between them. When they had stopped for the night, it was their custom to discuss some very fundamental question until they fell asleep, which they usually did before they reached any conclusion.

One night they had stopped at an oasis, and after the meal they were sitting round, gazing pensively into the clear waters bubbling up out of the sand, and waiting for the discussion to start (which it usually seemed to do of its own accord). They saw the reflections of the stars in the water and noticed how they appeared to wobble about. "I wonder why it is," remarked one, "that Nature is treacherous to herself by making one beautiful sight appear ugly when reflected in another. Can it be that the earth is jealous of the sky?" The second wise man replied, "Do you really think that reflection ugly? What exactly do you mean by 'ugly'?" The first was silent for a time and then said, "When I used the word 'ugly' I intended to convey the idea that one of its attributes was that quality which men have agreed to call 'ugliness.' " "But what is that quality?" objected the second, and, the first again falling silent, the third, and wisest, of the travellers said, "I do not know what ugliness is." "And that," said the troubadour, "is the end of my parable, since I don't know what it is either." "And that," said the poet, "is the end of my parable, since I don't know what it is either." And that, wrote the essayist sadly, is the end of my essay, since I don't know what it is either.

# THE ADELPHI FORUM

## *The Empress of Jazz*

IN a year of casual visits to theatres and cinemas, only one experience stands out as having the pure recreative quality: the dancing of Josephine Baker, who stars at the Casino de Paris and who is rumoured to be coming to London this winter. Everyone who can should go to see her. "Tout Paris," her enemies have chanted, "s'affole du derrière d'une négresse"; but "Tout Paris" on this occasion shows better taste than those superior folk who think that there is something necessarily dirty in an almost nude negress exhibiting her hind quarters. In Vienna her visit provoked riots, and that is understandable, for her half wild yet sweetly tame demeanour and her innocent extravagance are positively explosive amid the tawdry luxury and tired salaciousness of the typical cosmopolitan musical "show."

She came to Paris some years ago, unknown, with an American negro revue and in a short time she was established as the figurehead and symbol of Parisian entertainment, the legitimate successor of Spinelly and Mistinguett. Her equipment consists of a pleasant and fairly strong voice (which is capable of going right off the note), a remarkable coiffure (achieved by means of a preparation now called "Bakerfix," which makes her blue-black hair adhere to her skull like the china hair of a Dutch doll and gives it the soapy glister of shellac), the companionship of a small cheetah, and her body. As soon as she discards her pink ostrich feathers and muslin draperies and reveals her faintly coffee-coloured, almost white limbs, you recognize that she has some quality that makes her, in the strict sense of the word, incomparable.

The most graceful dancer, the most beautiful "Show girl," are

to her as a shapely carriage-horse to a wild zebra, or, if the fantasy may be allowed, as sweet lemonade to clear water. She moves with a liquid, savage, innocent freedom that makes the most grotesque poses, with bent knees and elbows, or stiff legs and protruded hind quarters, seem fresh and funny. Her build suggests rather those figures on Greek vases with unnaturally long and tapering thighs and calves than the anatomy of normal sculpture. Her eyes are large and certainly not inexpressive; yet there seems an indefinable barrier between what they express and what we should expect. When she winks or makes eyes or expresses astonishment, we know what she means, yet there is a suggestion of mindlessness, detachment, behind it.

Her success may possibly be a symptom of decadent modern taste—the nostalgia of the primitive; negro sculpture; the blood-pulsing rhythms of jazz—but she herself is certainly not decadent. With her loose, free movements and her strong, springy joints, Josephine, "l'Impératrice du Jazz," is a thing of almost unnatural naturalness and beauty.

R. R.

* * * *

# *Majesty*

"History has swept on in its majestic course since 1918 . . ." said Mr. Edward Marjoribanks, M.P. (Eastbourne), in the *Daily Express* for 4th August.

"I gave 'er one look, and then I swep' out."

## *Create the Antithesis*

A SPRIGHTLY correspondence has lately been started in the *Times* by a letter from Mr. Bernard Shaw on Russian Communism. The letter, I should say, was characteristic of Mr. Shaw at his worst; and a curiously belated Mr. Shaw at that. This odd epistle ends:

"To call them (the Russians) religious, and the Third International a Catholic Church, seems to them a Shavian joke, as it may seem to some of our own Catholics a Shavian blasphemy.

I refer both sides to the saying of Father Keegan in *John Bull's Other Island*: Every jest is an earnest in the womb of Time."

This one has been so long delivered that it is now well past infancy: indeed, almost adolescent. The quasi-religious devotion of the Russian Communist to his ideal is a commonplace, as Mr. Ernest Barker promptly pointed out.

But one letter, unkindly printed in small type, goes to the root of the matter. It is from Canon Oliver Quick—one of our most admirable theologians. In this matter he is an admirable controversialist. Here is the letter:

> "It is a pity that Mr. Bernard Shaw still labours under the Victorian delusion that what he says will be regarded as so blasphemous and shocking that he need not trouble to think out his case or carry his case or carry his arguments to their logical conclusion. No doubt it may be very true that Communism on the Russian model represents an extreme and amazingly successful reaction, not only against the economic system which has had such disastrous results in Western Europe, but also against the ideals which have in part helped to create that system and in part also have condemned it. The system of individualism, based on the laws of monogamy, the family and private property, is not completely separable from the notion of the absolute value of the individual; and that notion again can only be justified by a type of ethical religion which involves some sort of belief in eternal reality. Now Communism (if we are

to accept Mr. Shaw's account of it, which is all that matters for the present purpose) stands for the rejection of this whole connected system of ideas. Its rigorously enforced religion is the anti-religion which denies eternal reality *in toto*, and consequently makes the temporal survival, not of the individual, but of the State, the only end of life. (Whether the individuals of future generations will or will not secure happiness as a result of this survival does not affect the point.) Action then becomes 'good' or 'bad,' 'right' or 'wrong,' solely in so far as it is a means to this end. Therefore, what we call morality vanishes altogether. If the action of an individual tends to endanger the survival of the Communistic State, then, and then only, he must 'disappear.' It is meaningless to ask whether to kill him is ethically right or wrong—we can only ask whether it is the most efficient means to preserve the State, or else possibly a blunder. In the same way, if an individual's views or beliefs are opposed to Communism, it is irrelevant to consider their truth; the question is solely whether it is not expedient to stamp them out.

"If such are the principles on which Communists act, their whole philosophy is a biological pragmatism which destroys not only the economic individualism, which in its extreme form has been challenged by all the best European thought since Plato, but also the whole doctrine of spiritual values by which Platonism and Christianity have moulded the ideals of our Western world. Communism in principle is seeking to convert human society into something which resembles an infinitely more complicated and efficient ants' nest or beehive, where each particular ant or bee is not an individual at all but merely a link in the chain which constitutes a surviving community. Is this really the goal to which Mr. Bernard Shaw would have us tread his Fabian way? I cannot believe it. But it is indeed a serious issue with which we are confronted; and Mr. Shaw, for all his jests and blasphemies, must help to direct us one way or the other."

That, it seems to me, is an absolutely just account of the philosophy implicit in the present system of government in Russia. Whether or not it is consciously present in the minds of Stalin and his associates is another question and not a very important one.

None the less the issue is not between "the doctrine of spiritual values by which Platonism and Christianity have moulded the ideals of the Western world" and a negation of those spiritual values. The negation exists clearly enough, in Russia. Where shall we look for the assertion? We might say, for the purposes of argument, that it is to be found in the Catholic Church. And that is the form in which many modern writers, particularly in France, are fond of envisaging the opposition. It is schematically attractive, but no more. Catholicism and Russian Communism are indeed enemies; but they do not in fact encounter one another. In spite of its seeming strength, Catholic Christianity is in decay.

What interests me particularly is that Canon Quick himself cannot positively say where the spiritual values of Platonism and Christianity are now embodied. He has no direct and immediate answer to the question: What is the alternative, or rather the real opposition, to Russian Communism? He regards this as an unsolved problem, and not—as we would expect—one to which the answer is obvious and foregone. For this dubiety, I respect him. This dubiety, I should say, is common at the present time to all conscious men: among whom I do not reckon Mr. Shaw. He "must help to direct us one way or the other," says Canon Quick. He ought to be helping, it is true; but he is incapable of so doing.

Russian Communism is a symbol, not an example to the West. It is a symbol because it is based on a complete denial of transcendentalism; it is not an example, because it is based on an incomplete and palpably false materialism. The philosophy of Russian Communism, as Canon Quick truly says, is a biological pragmatism. And that is disastrous: so humanly disastrous that I take it upon me to prophesy that Russian Communism will not survive for very long in its present form. It will evolve into something essentially different, perhaps peaceably, perhaps catastrophically. Biological pragmatism can endure as the basis of the Russian system precisely so long as Russia, in the biological

sense, lags behind the Western world; when Russia reaches an approximate biological equality with the West, its incomplete materialism will have to be completed. Then will be the crucial moment for the Russian experiment. I see not the faintest reason to suppose that the Russian leaders are in the least prepared for it. Assuredly they have more pressing concerns: but unless they are prepared for it they will cut a very small figure indeed in human history.

The business of those who understand that Russia is a symbol not an example to the West is to complete this incomplete materialism of Russia—is to find something in place of the biological pragmatism, which could become a national philosophy *only* in Russia, by reason of her precise degree of economic and social backwardness: to evolve (if I may use a word of my own coining) a metabiological pragmatism, which shall not mutilate human nature. There is really no fear of our reverting to biological pragmatism; we can recognise, some clearly, some dumbly and instinctively, what is apparently concealed from Mr. Shaw: namely that just as in some respects the Russian is an advance upon the Western system, in other and equally important respects it is a barbarous retrogression from Western achievement. The danger is that from a sort of mental inertia we shall not be prepared with the true antithesis to Russian Communism when the moment, in our destiny or theirs, or both together, comes for its manifestation. The danger is that we shall slip back, in a sort of despair, into accepting an antithesis—such as that between Catholicism and Communism—which is schematically true, but creatively false: one which has merely a speculative and ghostly reality. In other words, we have *to create the antithesis to Russia*: it is not given, it does not already exist, unless in potentiality in those who are conscious of the necessity for its creation.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY

## *Ethics and Reality*

I HAVE read with great interest the Editor's and Mr. Murry's comments on my criticism of the *Adelphi.* They have left me, however, with the conviction that there is little to be gained by carrying the discussion any further. But first of all let me deal with two points raised by Mr. Murry in his article.

In the first place he accuses me of having confused the issues by involving Neo-romanticism, the *Adelphi*, Mr. Edwards and himself in a comprehensive indictment. This seems to me to be perfectly reasonable, and I willingly retract.

In the second place he takes exception to my suggestion that he is among those who have reached religion along "the pathway of art." Here again, I think that his objection is justified; I should have expressed myself with more caution. Actually, I should never dream of suggesting that the basis of his philosophy is not a direct experience of life; the notion would, indeed, be preposterous. What I meant to convey was that his intellectual background is pre-eminently that of the artist and the poet, rather than of the religious philosopher; it is literature rather than philosophy or theology which provides him with the material for presenting and developing his ideas. Manifestly this makes for a type of insight which cannot be too highly valued. But there are other insights, no less important, which are attained to by other roads. And I cannot help feeling that he tends to under-estimate their significance.

Turning now to the central problem of the relation of the "moral" to the "spiritual," all one can usefully do, it would seem, is to define as clearly as possible the basic issues involved, and leave it at that:

Man lives at one and the same time in two different dimensions of existence. He is so constituted that he can apprehend an order of Reality in which all differences of good and evil are trans-

cended. This every imaginative person is bound to recognise (though there are certain philosophical difficulties: see *The Prospects of Humanism*, p. 212). But he is alive also in that other dimension in which the difference between good and evil is not merely "important" (in the sense that moral behaviour satisfies a certain biological urge, etc.), but absolutely a matter of life and death. For the more orthodox philosopher these two dimensions are *equally* significant for man. That is to say he would hold that we know of no experience which is *more* vital than that of "right action;" there is nothing more central than the identification of the self with the good.

Why man is called upon to live in this twofold relation to the universe is a mystery which must be accepted as being beyond our human comprehension. But any philosophy which is to be adequate to our experience must take it into account. It is not a question, as the Editor would have it, of "picking and choosing" between two opposing philosophies, but of framing a philosophy which shall do justice to the totality of the facts.

If, however, a person does not accept the facts, there is nothing more to say. Most of us are disposed to believe that in seeking to change evil into good we are relating ourselves to the Real in the most intimate possible fashion. Mr. Murry, on the contrary, would have it that those who feel thus have not yet attained to that "complete denudation of the *ego*" which is necessary for a complete spiritual emancipation, that they have refused to "die their death."

Which is in the right? Disputation is fruitless. It is a matter of following the deepest instincts in one's being. Each must take his stand upon the most profound insight to which he can attain. Which type of vision is the more discerning, time alone will show.

LAWRENCE HYDE

# *Intellect and Love*

I HAVE followed with interest the discussion that has been carried on since July in the *Adelphi* between Messrs Hyde, Murry, Rees, Edwards and others; and it seems to me, if I rightly understand the general tendency of the *Adelphi*, that the differing standpoints reveal a fissure which may profitably be driven deeper so as to lay bare the essential core of the problem.

Common to all the disputants, as the starting point from which they reach opposite conclusions, is the attempt to know Reality by means of the faculties of Mind and Heart, but there has been, I consider, a serious confusion with regard to the functions attributed to these two faculties. A confusion which Mr. Rees has worse confounded by his appeal to Spinoza and Monism. I have grounds for thinking that I understand Rees' point of view and I consider that the fact that "it is very hard to explain except to those who already share it" is no excuse for those who share it when they fail to make themselves clear. Not that I would claim to be able to elucidate such a question in a few lines. Nevertheless I would like to clear up one or two points and offer certain of my own conclusions which I have no space to develop here.

The individual experiences himself, from the point of view of his ego, as an isolated entity.

This ego created out of the universe, is posited by itself, as against the rest of the universe, in order to become conscious.

Therefore the ego is a *question-mark* which imposes itself, demanding an answer; this is what is called the problem of consciousness. The ego isolates itself, in the perception of itself as an entity, and this *isolated* consciousness is the cause of the problem.

Therefore the problem will never be solved by any ego. It is for the ego, not to solve a problem but to dissolve its own isolated entity. This entity can only be dissolved by becoming fully self-conscious. To become fully self-conscious the individual has to detach himself from all the associations and dissociations which make his personality (The "I," the subject, even in animal life, associates itself with the objects of its desire and dissociates itself from them when it no longer wants them). The *permanent* associations and dissociations make what is called the "self." For every permanent association—affective, intellectual, etc.—there is a corresponding dissociation; and this duality is the basis of

the notion that one is an entity. It prevents us from discovering the Real. (*"I" think*, says the ego of itself, thus associating itself with the thought: *"I" am*; but to say this is to dream, for this association means: *"I" dissociate myself from that which does not think;* thus there is a duality, which means unconsciousness...) So long as the ego is caught in the mechanism of association-dissociation (which includes every dualism) it is not fully self-conscious; it conceives itself as an entity and this conception is based on the unconscious.

Both the intellect and the love of a man who believes himself an individual entity are based on the unconscious and therefore, instead of helping him to discover reality, they reinforce his unconsciousness.

When the ego has freed itself from the play of association-dissociation, that is, when the flame of self-consciousness has entirely destroyed the unconsciousness which feeds the notion of individual entity, the entity no longer exists; man has no longer a centre of consciousness, he is Consciousness; or, more accurately, where there was an ego there is now Consciousness.

At the moment when the ego merges into the universal, the "question mark" of course disappears. *There is no longer any problem.*

To arrive at this result, the two faculties of the ego—intelligence and love—must not be used for understanding the universe, or loving this man, that woman, humanity, God, and so on; they must combine *within the ego* to illuminate it in all its recesses.

But the ego seeks to prevent them from combining into a single beam, for when they do so they destroy the antinomy by which the ego lives. Thus the ego *appears* to have a self-destructive power; but in reality the faculties of intelligence and love do not belong to the ego. They are like two streams of a single river of life and the ego is merely a resistance in the current, like an island which divides it into two branches.

Therefore: the ego is not Life. It is opposed to Life. Therefore: Love, as a means towards Consciousness, breaks down the permanent dissociations of the ego; and intelligence, as a means towards Consciousness, breaks down the permanent associations of the ego.

With the death of the ego its dissociation from the universal ceases (it is no longer isolated, it becomes Love) and the association with the universal ceases too (metaphysics disappear in Consciousness).

*Conclusions:* (1) Up to now, all men (including Spinoza) have been

dreaming. Spinoza, for example, says that Substance (others would say Life) has an infinity of attributes (concepts) and that each human soul is a part of this infinity. In the same way the hump of a hunchback might say that Substance is an infinity of humps and that each hump is immortal.

(2) The idea of humanity, by which I mean the universal, is only beginning to emerge to-day.

CARLO SUARÈS

[*Mr. Suarès further conclusions will be developed in two essays which will appear in the Adelphi for October and November. Ed.*]

# *Faith*

" SUCH also is mystic faith. It is the power to transfigure reality, not to change it. There is in the gospels a Jesus who refuses to work miracles, who will not consent to throw himself from the top of the mountain or to turn the stones of the desert into bread. It is the same Jesus who refuses to promise men future happiness in another life, but says to them: The Kingdom of God is within you, you yourselves possess your happiness."

JULES DE GAULTIER (*The New Adelphi*, December, 1927, p. 128)

# REVIEWS

## *Classical Fallacies*

THE CIVILISED MAN. *By F. McEachran* (Faber & Faber) *7s. 6d.*

MR. McEACHRAN follows Hulme in defining and praising a "classical" attitude which accepts "the ideal of man as a being cut off from the lower species of nature, the belief in a power beyond man, and the belief that man to a large extent carves out his own destiny." Had he argued consistently from that definition and elucidated the relation of that faith to contemporary problems, his book would have been of great importance, but he employs several fallacious arguments. Thus, having introduced a concept of Divinity as something infinitely more valuable than "human things" he argues that man remains limited and constant with reference to the Divine; and since man is limited and constant there can be, he says, no progress. This argument is speciously disguised, but essentially it proceeds by comparing the finite with the infinite and resembles the schoolboy proof that $2 = 1$ by use of the equation $0 = 0$.

Mr. McEachran, in fact, confuses the reasonable statement that "progress has no moral value" with the nonsensical one: "progress is non-existent." Thus he can say "Pythagoras had one idea about the universe, Plato another, Aristotle another, Thomas Aquinas, Newton, Kant, and Einstein likewise have others, and we repeat once again that the true view is found, not by rejecting one in favour of the other, but by comparing one with the other, and finding out what is common to all. This will give us a key to the opinions of the future."

I cannot see how, on this view of truth, Kant and Einstein found anything new to say, for according to Mr. McEachran, if it hadn't been said already it wasn't true. He seems to be confusing the moral rightness of Plato's ethics with the pragmatic "truth" of Einstein's physics (and yet, on page 94, talking of the Thirteenth Century, he quite rightly says: The root of the confusion is that the medieval thinkers never succeeded in separating "science" from "ethics,") or he may be speaking as historian, not as scientist or philosopher. His statements would be more comprehensible if they were made in a rigid propositional form. The statement "It is true that Newton believed so-

and-so " is not the same thing as "So-and-so is true." Only a very blinding prejudice can account for such lapses, yet they occur in the work of Hulme and Wyndham Lewis as frequently as in *The Civilised Man*, and one begins to suspect that the English neo-classicists are not so much genuine neo-classicists as romantics romanticising about classicism.

*The Civilised Man* is an expression of an attitude which is becoming more and more common among intellectual writers to-day; it is therefore important to try to understand it and to raise those apparent objections which one hopes Mr. McEachran's later books will answer. It is, as the publisher says, an erudite book, but it must be read with care, for the author has not always sufficiently scrutinised those facts which support his thesis. Thus he says that "where Bacon was most original, and where his influence was most deeply felt, was in his rejection of the Aristotelian teleological science in favour of the atomism of Leucippus and Democritus, and in his advocacy of scientific experiment and the empirical method in general instead of the deductive method which explains nature by final causes."

That statement is quite false. The men who influenced Galileo and Kepler and (subsequently) Bacon, were Peter Ramus and Giordano Bruno. Bacon was little more than the publicity agent to an intellectual movement which had been in full swing for fifty years, and which could be traced back to Nicolas of Cusa and Roger Bacon. The point is not important, but the occurrence of similar misstatements on pages 22 and 103 suggests that Mr. McEachran, however honest he may be, lacks a "Classical" detachment and disinterestedness. He is more eager to obtain converts than he is to find the truth.

Like Hulme and Wyndham Lewis he sometimes allows irrelevant prejudice and association to distort his judgment and his use of words. Sculpture and tragedy, he maintains, are classical arts: music is not a classical art. Therefore it is bad.

This confusion of what is classical according to his definition with what was historically Greek probably comes from something deeper than an accidental preference for plastic rather than musical art. It is characteristic of all those writers who can see history and to whom Time is the enemy. This curious yearning for permanence is very like the old yearning for infinity: it is romantic in the bad sense and leads these writers, though they extol the abstract intellect, to condemn as

"romantic" and "musical" the highly abstract structure of modern physics in which all measurements whether of time or distance, are measurements and nothing more. For the mathematical physicist, all frames of reference which enable him to show a simple set of relationships between his measurements are equivalent. But the ordinary man, like Mr. McEachran, is passionately devoted to G.M.T., and rightly so. To be told that, however useful it may be for local purposes, Greenwich Mean Time must, for cosmological purposes, be regarded as only one arbitrarily chosen direction in a continuum, puzzles and enrages the amateur of the spatial arts. He forgets that scientific theories are merely meant to be useful in their own field, they assert nothing about "reality." Mr. McEachran actually includes Einstein and Newton in a list of metaphysicians! For the purposes of relativistic physics, our space is not unique. Mr. McEachran and Mr. Wyndham Lewis assume that the relativist says "this space is not unique" and feel that they are being swept away from their cherished world of architectural and sculptural order into a wild disordered flood. The word flux, which to the physicist suggests spatio-temporal structure, is used by those who prefer spatial structure as a rhetorical emotive symbol for formlessness and chaos.

Music (which the critic does not greatly appreciate) is then said to be an art of flux, an emotional art in which no order is perceptible. The critic has not only identified order with "static" or "spatial" order but has confused absence of logical order with the absence of imaginative order. He is applying tests to music which he would not venture to apply to sculpture. Even the most "geometrical" sculpture depends on imaginative order and is less geometrical than a crystal or a flower, but Mr. McEachran writes:

> ". . . there is no doubt that the popularisation of music, and often bad music, and the over-emphasis laid on it, has led in the minds of men to a shifting of emphasis in art from the forming element which corresponds philosophically with the will, to the element of expression which corresponds to unformed raw matter, and that in this respect it represents a regression from civilisation to something which is beneath it . . . It is worth noting that it was the nations devoted above all to music who, during the conflict, collapsed under the strain. . .
>
> . . . With regard to Germany, we have a race of stock similar to

the English, but which has developed to its own disadvantage in a musical direction and which, typically, in modern times has produced few great men of character and stability. . . England, France and America have a far larger proportion of men of firm character than any of the countries mentioned, and they have lacked publicity in history simply because of their larger number."

Mr. McEachran might as well argue that Greece disintegrated because the Greeks, by over-emphasising sculpture, became fossilised and unadaptable, but somewhere at the back of Mr. McEachran's mind there is probably an honest conviction that music is bad because it can affect a whole crowd at once and because in listening to it one's emotions are compelled to follow a certain sequence, a process which, he thinks, diminishes the dignity of his individual will: for Mr. McEachran believes in the value of a self-discipline which he calls restraint and which, he claims, marks off man from the lower creatures. Now we may question whether that restraint, which some writers call conscience, does indeed mark man off from the animals, for it seems impossible to prove that it is not simply an inner balancing of impulses, but we do not question its value. As Mr. McEachran has said elsewhere, the will to refrain "denotes nothing less than the act of selection which all men, humanist or romantic, have to perform in order to achieve any end at all."

If Mr. McEachran meant no more than that there would be no excuse for the fuss which he and the Humanists make about the term, but although he is not explicit, his book shows that he refers to that restraint from useless action, that self-control in adversity, which is shown in great tragedy and which gives to the spectator as to the hero a deep conviction that precisely because events appear unbearably evil, there exists a goodness in the world, an ideal series imagined and willed by the mind of man. It doesn't seem to matter very much whether you call the resulting serenity a balancing of impulses, or a purgation of the soul, or "the noblest feeling which man in his human life can experience."

But it does matter that people should not be allowed to get away with it too easily, to confuse on the one hand that tragic vision of an order willed and worked for, and on the other the common self-indulgence of dream phantasy. Mr. McEachran's contempt for "progress" and his references to Greek "freedom" recall the lack of interest

in the condition—"spiritual" as well as material—of the ordinary working man and woman characteristic of drawing room philosophies, whether Humanist or Classical, professed by a plutocracy or aristocracy maintained by a docile multitude. There is no need to be an egalitarian or a communist believing that the individual should become submerged in the community in order to see that the multitude is always liable to wake up and smash a parasitic minority, however spiritual, when it ceases to find that minority good or useful *according to its own standards.* "In the name of public welfare and progress" may be, as Mr. McEachran says, a less glorious device than the older "*ad majorem Dei gloriam,*" but it is less pretentious and takes us a step nearer to the recognition that much of our "charity" is not gratuitous but is something necessary for our continued existence. But that is something different from the fallacies of which we have spoken, for to the Christian to whom there are other things more valuable than the continued existence of the human race, that view of charity is not necessary.

MICHAEL ROBERTS.

# *A Lost Boy*

SAVAGE MESSIAH. *By H. S. Ede* (Heinemann) 10*s.* 6*d.*

HENRI GAUDIER, the sculptor, was a singular being. He was a genius, a genius in his own right: his birthright. There's no doubt about that. He was as surely a genius as D. H. Lawrence was, or William Blake. He had a demon in him (a very devil sometimes), a demon that at once sustained him and enslaved him, that utterly possessed him flesh and spirit (and his flesh as much, if not more than his spirit), a demon that was potent in the very beating of his blood. All who met him must have felt it; and he must have felt strangely alone among them, and different from them all. He was soon at odds with most of them. Not that he couldn't love people: he did love—passionately and tenderly. But he could not, would not be contained. There was a scalding fire in his very flesh and blood that *must* overflow, and if cooler spirits would restrain it by their presence, with their laws and proprieties and fears and limited capacities, he'd see them damned first.

He just misses being one of the worst sort of degenerate bohemian. All his qualities in another person (or in himself if a certain fundamental sternness were missing) might make up only a vicious little

hanger-on of studio life. He has no morality, sexual or otherwise, nor has he any of the mentally imposed balance of the decent self-conscious man. When he loves his only control is the strength of his passion; when he hates it's the same; and his anger is bitter and without restraint. He is utterly unscrupulous (in so far as he can be). He will patronise a person he professes only contempt for so long as that person is of use to him, though his pride always prevents him from accepting money he hasn't earned. He works when he feels like it, and furiously; and when he doesn't feel like it he idles about, though in abject misery, be it said. His art is his work. Otherwise he has no principle of honour: no putting of the kingdom of heaven first and the rest to be added unto him—he doesn't trust men enough for that. When he hopes, there's no bound of probability to his hopes; when he is despondent he is sick with it. The violence of his revulsions is terrible, his rage terrifying. He makes friends with Middleton Murry, sculpts his head, then, when Murry angers him, destroys the head with stones. Once he has a fight with a carter, knocks him out in the street, is running away before he shall be surrounded by a crowd, but turns to give the carter one ferocious kick in the chest as a parting gift. His devil had him then.

But it's a waste of time applying a moral or psychological norm to him; not because he's necessarily beyond them, but because they are useless and irrelevant. It's obvious from this book that there was something far more important in him, and more real. It is quite true that in sex matters he had no ethical sense, and the frankly physical nature of his affections, even when they weren't sexual, may be to some offensively "French"; but throughout his letters there are hints of the most acute sexual suffering which it is plain was due neither to moral laxity nor psychological inhibitions, but to the restraints of his innate virtue. A sure proof of this, if needed, is the complete absence from his thought of those metaphysical analyses which in a sensitive nature are the inevitable complement of indulgence in physical lust. His thoughts are simple: when he is analytical it has an immediate practical bearing on his craft; when he is speculative it is with the wonder of a child; when he is philosophical he is but reflecting questioningly on his immediate experience, and a little tired. He is burdened with no scheme of cause and effect, no abstract conception of right and wrong. "Art has no moral aim, it is simply an interpretation of life—and life has no moral aim either; though one can draw a certain amount of

morality from it to help the intellect in its battle with the elements." Nor is he concerned with differentiating elaborate categories or with definitions from the absolute downwards. "There is a live body, that is all". It is a simple creed and has one advantage: that it is not a belief, but a fact.

His friendship with Miss Brzeska has the same irregularity and wayward strength as his own nature. She was about twenty years older than he, and a Pole of an extremely neurotic temperament. She had suffered much and in her attempt to stop her suffering, had probed into each separate pain till her brooding upon it had become itself a greater pain, ever new and poignant. Against his free spontaneous nature she is an unattractive self-lacerated creature. But she is also infinitely pathetic. A fate of ill-luck seems to have pursued her. No matter what good came her way something was always wrong with it; and she lived in a state of continual flurry, excitement, and nervous apprehension. But there was more to her than that, and Henri Gaudier must have recognised in her a creature of an intensity akin to his own. But she was a woman concealed in herself, submerged in suffering beneath a queer tangle of pride and self-distrust. Perhaps Gaudier was the only person who ever saw her, who really touched her unfree heart into response. It was the unbreakable bond between them: and, to her, the best times she had with him must have been the only oases of happiness in her life. She lived for seven years after his death, but her secret soul sank lower and lower beneath a burden of remorse and self-condemnation and obsession with her loss till from being eccentric she became queer, and from being queer she became mad.

Naturally, their life together was turbulent with conflict; and their correspondence is often full of recriminations and self-defence. He demands of her that she be friend, mother, sister, mistress to him, and each at the moment of his choice: she in turn wants indulgence for her every intellectual preconception and pity for her every resuscitated pain. But they're both human, so the battle rages; and after every reconciliation it begins again. She accuses him of conceit and of changing his ideas every day; he accuses her of pride and of mental principles she refuses to let go. Her worst weapon against him is her intellectual detachment (a pose of which he is absolutely incapable without killing himself); his best weapon against her is relentless truth—though sometimes it well-nigh kills. Sometimes he writes to her like a father, or at

least a big and wise brother cheering her on; at other times there is a tone of pleading, an ache of loneliness, a homesickness for something, as to a mother from a boy. In his strength there is his just portion of weakness, and human need.

He was twenty-three when he died. He was killed in the War, fighting in the French Army. That is a sad nemesis to have overtaken him; but only sad, not tragic. He was not broken, he was only killed. His demon power ensured that he would not break; in the trenches he could still carve a maternity group on the butt-end of a rifle. It is true that his strength was not strong enough (whose is?); that perhaps it was too much of animal power, too little redeemed by a human spirit; all his passions were not joys, nor his devils angels at his service. But far better for him to be as he was than to be broken into a million dissociated bits and spend the rest of his life in conceited contemplation of his own complexity. He remained simple; his feelings direct, his thoughts relevant and utterly sane—and at that he was not a thinker, he was a sculptor. His business was to give expression in solid form to his experience, his knowledge and his desires. Of that he was sure. Apart from that he was lost and questioning and a little afraid in a dark inimical world, a lone panther in a wilderness of ordinary men. But he trusted to experience to give him the clue. And it did. That is the meaning of his story. "Our one consolation is love, confidence, the embracing of spirit and of body. When we are united we think neither of outer darkness nor of animal brutality. Our human superiority vibrates through our passions, and we love the world . . ." Of course love isn't given to man all the time. But when it isn't, he must fight. So Gaudier dying in battle is right again. Only he ought to have died fighting the world: instead he died fighting for it.

G. B. EDWARDS

## *The Progress of the Soul*

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE: 1820–1856. *By I. B. O'Malley* (Thornton Butterworth) 21*s*.

THIS important book divides itself into two portions, the first dealing with Florence Nightingale's life up to her departure for Scutari, when she was thirty-four years old, the second with her two years of labour in the Crimea. Those who are chiefly interested in action will be inclined to skim the first part and concentrate upon the second. The latter is, indeed, of absorbing interest. It shows us once more those overwhelming difficulties and clearer than before the woman who coped with them—not the simplified, sentimental figure with the lamp, nor the disagreeable, "managing" spinster of the equally simple, anti-feminist view, but a woman of the world and yet profoundly religious, whose wisdom was as remarkable as her courage. It is with the *growth* of this character and wisdom and imagination that the first part of the book is concerned; and because this growth is set forth in peculiar detail, forming a human document of quite peculiar interest and value, the present reviewer proposes to concentrate upon that part, leaving the more familiar material of the second to historians and those who will be temperamentally drawn to it.

§

Miss O'Malley has identified herself with her heroine in a way common among novelists but uncommon among biographers; this she has been enabled to do by sympathy and by the enormous mass of Florence's journals and outpourings, all confided to her by the Nightingale family. Those who read *Cassandra*, printed at the end of Mrs. Strachey's *The Cause*, already know the intensity and passion which Florence was able to convey in her writing, even when it was, as there, formless and ill-arranged. Very early she felt cramped by her life of rich aristocratic young-ladyhood; at twenty-five, writing of true religion as "the feeling . . . of the connection between the infinite Spirit and the finite Spirit," she referred to God's "strange punishment . . . of leaving us all earthly blessings which can be enumerated, and yet taking away our pleasure in them by a palsy incomprehensible even to ourselves." That palsy was the result of an existence which gave almost no scope either for the service of others or for contemplation—two activities without which life seemed to

Florence meaningless. The second she could attain, at least at night; the first she had to fight for, step by step. Mrs. Nightingale thought her desire to serve when she might have been amusing herself or marrying Monckton Milnes, ridiculous and tiresome; Parthe, suffering from acute unadmitted jealousy of her sister's brilliance and popularity, railed at her and developed mysterious diseases of the kind to-day dubbed "Freudian." They could not understand why she was discontented at home; as for her wish to go and nurse in hospitals, it was disgusting. There were "perpetual rows."

§

Not that Florence was an earnest prig. She loved to please; wished to be someone's bridesmaid; Airey's *Theory of Gravitation* "gave her the same feeling as Raphael's pictures"; she formed passionate attachments, notably that unhappy one to her cousin Marianne—attachments most unlike "the pure devotion without claim which was her ideal of human affection." She had a sense of beauty and a sense of humour. In 1853 her family were opposing her scheme to go as Superintendent to the Establishment for the Care of Gentlewomen in Sickness, and she wrote from the north asking Madame Mohl to support her against them, "in order that I may come when I arrive not with my tail between my legs, but gracefully curved round me, in the old way in which Perugino's devil wears it, in folds round the waist." She had an acute understanding, partly intuitive, partly acquired by observation of human nature; she wrote in her journal, having met Monckton Milnes eighteen months after refusing him:

> "I could be satisfied to spend a life with him combining our different powers in some great object. I could not satisfy this nature by spending a life with him in making society and arranging domestic things. Furthermore, I do not see how married life is to continue without more nutritive food than it can obtain from the present little things of social life . . . I must strive after a better life for women. Can I strive after it as a married woman? Would he let me?"

And two years later Parthe wrote of her: "Her influence upon people's minds and her curiosity in getting into varieties of mind is insatiable"—which, despite its odd grammar, conveys its meaning.

Florence, in fact, was a woman who could think for herself; by dint of observing poverty and meditating upon it, she early ceased to share

her mother's views of what it was sufficient to do for the "lower orders." Florence's conclusions reinforced her naturally strong feelings; she revolted against pain and disease, and her revolt took a practical form: she nursed the sick in the village. At the age of seventeen she had felt a "Call" to God's work; at twenty she was already dissatisfied with the merely social life expected of her. She wished to train as a nurse. She had to struggle not only against the laws and assumptions of her caste and her mother, but against her own love of pleasure and admiration, and her desire for reciprocal love. The battle grew fierce, wavered, sank down, flared up again. The record of it is painful and inspiring. We are shown her intimate friendships, her travels, her love of nature, her passionate interest in religions—she felt great sympathy with the Egyptian as she conceived it—her sense of her relation towards God. She found the ties of affection hard to break; she could not know that with the first hint of success Mrs. Nightingale and still more, Parthe, would hasten to approve and "launch" her. When this occurred she was doubtless too busy to smile in irony. For with her escape from home her life had only just begun—her energies, not used up in the struggle, were released.

And victory, when it came, meant much more than a victory for her sex, and therefore for her nation, it meant victory for individual freedom of thought and judgment. She learned to be what Charlotte Bronte, writing to Mrs. Gaskell, called " her own woman": that is, to be truly herself; which meant, as perhaps it always does, to be selfless. Nobody reading this book could doubt that Florence Nightingale's emancipation marked a stage in the progress of the human soul.

E. B. C. JONES

## *Conflicting Reports of Russia*

RUSSIA UNVEILED. *By Panait Istrati.* Translated by R. J. S. Curtis (George Allen & Unwin) 10*s.*

ONE LOOKS AT RUSSIA. *By Henri Barbusse.* Translated by Warre B. Wells (J. M. Dent & Sons) 6*s.*

THE truth about any revolutionary social movement which has disturbed economic interests and stirred passions profoundly is desperately hard to come by, and the cynics have something of a case when they say that the chief result of improvement in the mechanism

of publicity is the better concealment of the facts. Do we know the true story of the French Revolution, even yet? And how many years, or generations, must pass before anything like the whole truth about Soviet Russia emerges?

A book of undiluted denunciation makes difficult reading. Mr. Istrati denounces foreign observers who bring back rosy reports after officially authorised tours of the show places, and claims to have dug below the surface and to have reported the truth and nothing but the truth. He might have strengthened his claim if he had told us more of the history of his rather sudden change of front towards the Soviet authorities; the personal flavour of his denunciations is hardly to be disregarded. He does not seem to allow enough for the violent effort needed to transform the Soviet Union, in the face of the world's dominant interests, into a modern, large-scale production community, or for the capacity of the Russian masses to endure, in their gloomy-cheerful Russian way, conditions unendurable to Western nerves and stomachs. There is a growing body of evidence, from quarters not prejudiced in favour of the Soviets, that the effort is proving more successful than would have seemed possible a few years ago, and that the Government, whatever its faults, enjoys a measure of support that could never be given for long to a gang of mere villains. The present situation, difficult and unpleasant as it may be, springs straight from centuries of history; but one would not guess it from this book.

Mr. Henri Barbusse, in *One Looks at Russia*, gives a series of Russian pictures from a frankly friendly point of view—the Sixth International Congress (with a vivid impression of Chinese delegates shouting their war-cry in chorus), the "drama of land and corn," the fever of building gigantic offices and factories, the seven-hour day, the new films, the picturesque Crimea with its new function of sanatorium for workers and children, an interview with Gorki just returned from many years abroad to a new, strange world, Barbusse's impressions of the changed psychology of the people. The book would be worth reading for the writing alone, especially in the description of Crimean scenery and an idyllic sketch of "the oldest man alive." But the author claims that it is a serious and accurate study. "There is", he says, "only one proper attitude. It is to study Soviet realities as meticulously and as scientifically as possible; to form an opinion based entirely upon the most accurate facts and figures. . . . This has been our method of pro-

cedure. . . . In the face of the mass of documentary evidence which is piling up every day about the Russia of the Soviets, it becomes increasingly dangerous and ridiculous to call in question its tremendous achievement." He insists on looking on the movement as a whole, in relation both to history and to the rest of the world to-day. But a conviction that it is advancing, in the face of tremendous odds, to success, "does not mean that we must close our eyes to the defects and blemishes which result from the application of the system. When they are at work, and when it is not a question of presenting a picture of the whole and of explaining the whole to their peoples, the Soviet creators criticise themselves with merciless severity, and are never satisfied that they have attained their goal."

How far the reading of these two books, and many more besides, will enable a student to know what is really going on in the Soviet Union, and to judge what is likely to happen in the next few years, is doubtful. The issues are too big, both for the Soviets and for the rest of the world, and passions run too high. But there are two things that do not seem doubtful: the world is enormously interested in the experiment, and a return to anything like the pre-war regime of Russia is unthinkable.

G. L. D. DE VERE

## *Shorter Notices*

THE CORN KING AND THE SPRING QUEEN. *By Naomi Mitchison* (Cape) 10*s* 6*d.*

Mrs. Mitchison does herself injustice when, in her foreword, she explains the neat little summaries which follow each section of her book by saying that "it is difficult to remember just what happened." The defect of *The Corn King and the Spring Queen* does not lie in any want of vividness. Her descriptive power never fails her. To a reader with even a moderate gift of visual memory there will remain at the end of his reading a complete and brightly coloured tapestry of great intricacy upon which, against backgrounds often of entrancing beauty, a number of queer figures, lively rather than life-like, appear in a vast variety of attitudes graceful or grotesque. One observes them with an admiring curiosity, but their cruelties excite one's horror as little as their loves engage one's emotions; their plots bring no catch to the

breath; their fighting leaves the blood unstirred; even their obscenities do not shock.

But she is right in calling the book long and crowded. It is too long and it is overcrowded, and this is not surprising because there are in it two quite separate stories, neither of them really necessary to the development of the other; and indeed their interweaving is imperfect. One feels that the Corn King and the Spring Queen visited Sparta less for any private reasons of their own than because their creator's historical researches had supplied her with information about that State at the appropriate period and with an irresistible desire to communicate it.

Yet, though the author's interest seems to have been devoted to archæology rather than to the human aspect of her characters, and though a didactic tendency has led her to clog the narrative with redundancies, it is impossible not to admire the book. It is never for a moment dull.

DUTCH AGNES HER VALENTINE. *By W. G. Collingwood* (Heinemann) 6*s.*

This book has been reprinted after lying in undeserved obscurity for twenty years. It is done in the form of a diary, kept by the priest of a remote northern parish in the sixteen-twenties. The priest, a sort of clerical Monsieur Bergeret, lives among rustics who like him but have nothing in common with him intellectually, and on whose charity he is dependant for his living. He is so poor that he cannot even marry, and most of the book is taken up in recording his love for a young girl, daughter of a Dutch miner, whom he finally relinquishes to someone who can support her. In the background there are the plots of the period and the religious wars in Germany, which keep the priest in constant hot water for being too popish or too puritanical. The author avowedly makes no show of writing "in period," and uses more or less modern language, but the semblance of life in a self-supporting, almost medieval village is extraordinarily well conveyed. It is a picture of rustic England when it was too artless even to be boorish—the England of "Come lasses and lads"—and the book would be worth reading for its historical interest alone. It is very short, and the diary entries are made at irregular intervals, giving an effect of casualness which adds to its delicate, aquarelle quality.

*Printed by the Shenval Press, 58 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1, and published for the proprietors at 58 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1. Advertising Manager, S. R. Le Mare, 23 Paternoster Square, E.C.4. Telephone: City 9107. Registered for transmission by Canadian Registered Post.*

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